CHHINDWARA

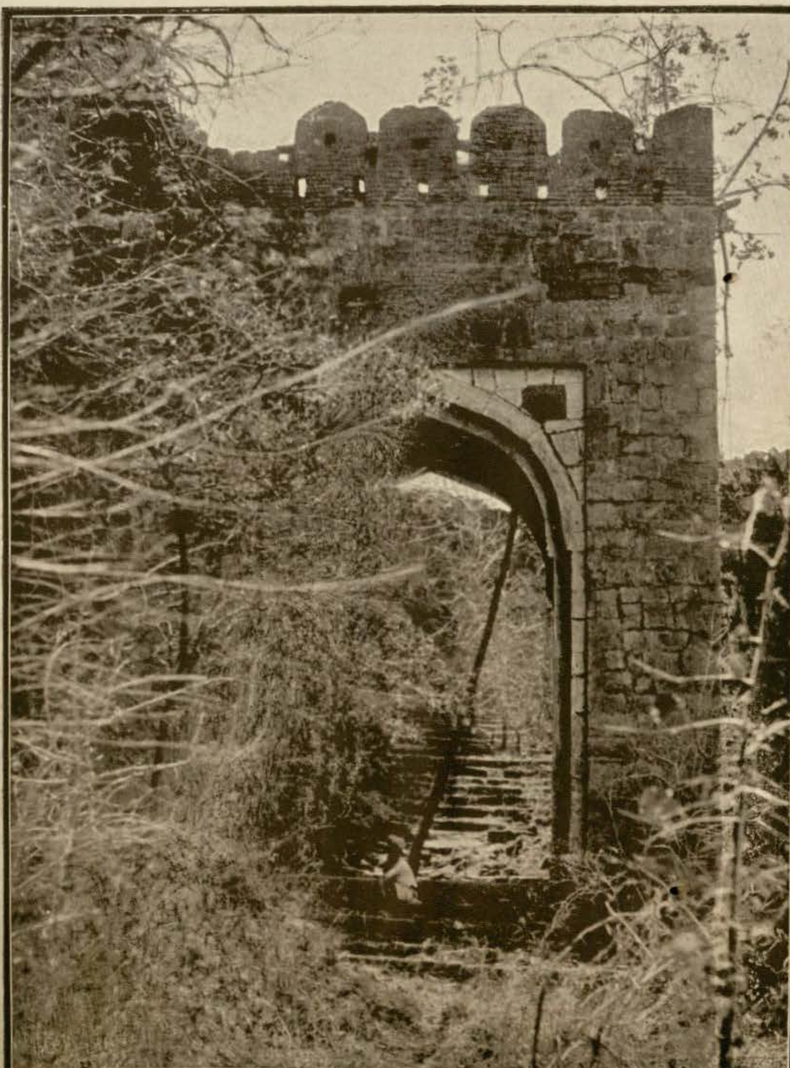


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ENTRANCE GATE, DEOGARH FORT.

CENTRAL PROVINCES DISTRICT GAZETTEERS

CHHINDWARA DISTRICT.

VOLUME A.

DESCRIPTIVE.

EDITED BY R. V. RUSSELL, I.C.S.

BOMBAY:
PRINTED AT THE TIMES PRESS.

1907.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE extant Settlement Reports on the Chhindwāra District are those of Mr. W. Ramsay (1869) and Mr. C. W. Montgomerie (1900). Mr. Montgomerie's Report gives a very interesting account of the District, and its agriculture and population, and a large part of the Gazetteer is merely reproduced from it, especially the descriptive portions. Besides numerous other extracts and quotations, the description of the District and its scenery, the chapter on Land Revenue Administration, and the articles on the jāgīrs in the appendix are taken almost entirely from this Report. Mr. J. A. C. Skinner, Deputy Commissioner, has contributed a note on the material condition of the people and a draft of the chapter on General Administration. The sections on Geology and Minerals have been taken from the *Geology of India* (Medlicott and Blanford) and from articles by Mr. Jones on the Southern Coal-fields of the Sātpurā basin and by Mr. L. Leigh Fermor on the Manganese Mining Industry. Mr. Fermor has corrected the articles and made some additions, especially the whole of paragraph 14 (Geology). The writer is indebted to Mr. Ditmas, Manager of the Pench Valley Coal Mines, for information on the mines. Mr. A. Brooke-Meares, District Superintendent of Police, has contributed a note on wild animals and birds. Mr. G. Falconer Taylor, Deputy Conservator of Forests, has sent notes on the Botany and Forests of the District. Mr. Montgomerie and Mr. E. Danks, Deputy Commissioner, have kindly read the proof and suggested some alterations.

PACHMARHI,

The 15th May 1907. R. V. R.

CHHINDWARA DISTRICT GAZETTEER.

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List of the Deputy Commissioners who have held charge of the Chhindwāra District since 1863, with the dates of their periods of office.

Name of Deputy Commissioner.	Period.	
	From	To
Major C. M. Shakespear	...	...
Captain A. B. Cumberlege	9-3-63	28-12-63
Captain H. F. Bolton	29-12-63	21-1-64
Major J. Ashburner	22-1-64	3-3-64
Captain H. F. Bolton	4-3-64	20-3-64
Captain C. V. Gordon	21-3-64	26-5-64
Major J. Ashburner	27-5-64	8-3-67
W. Ramsay, Esq., I.C.S.	9-3-67	8-6-67
Captain M. P. Ricketts	9-6-67	14-7-67
Major J. Ashburner	15-7-67	2-4-69
Lt. R. M. B. Thomas	3-4-69	1-5-69
Major E. M. Playfair	2-5-69	1-4-71
Captain F. B. Morris	2-4-71	10-4-71
Lt.-Col. H. F. Waddington	11-4-71	1-4-72
J. W. Tawney, Esq., I.C.S.	2-4-72	31-5-72
Lt.-Col. H. F. Waddington	1-6-72	31-10-73
H. J. MacGeorge, Esq.	1-11-73	22-2-76
Lt.-Col. C. B. Lucie Smith	23-2-76	21-3-76
Captain J. W. Macdougall	22-3-76	30-3-76
Lt.-Col. J. C. Wood	31-3-76	24-4-76
Captain H. H. Hallett	25-4-76	10-7-76
J. H. Fisher, Esq., I.C.S.	11-7-76	2-1-77
S. Jacob, Esq., I.C.S.	3-1-77	20-1-77
J. H. Fisher, Esq., I.C.S.	21-1-77	11-5-77
T. E. Ellison, Esq., I.C.S.	12-5-77	7-1-79
Major H. J. Lugard	8-1-79	16-4-79
T. E. Ellison, Esq., I.C.S.	17-4-79	2-9-79
J. W. Tawney, Esq., I.C.S.	3-9-79	15-7-83
Col. W. B. Thomson	16-7-83	17-11-84
Lt.-Col. W. Vertue	18-11-84	18-1-87
D. O. Meiklejohn, Esq., I.C.S. ...	19-1-87	18-4-87

List of the Deputy Commissioners who have held charge of the Chhindwāra District, etc. (concld.)

Name of Deputy Commissioner.	Period.	
	From	To
Lt.-Col. W. Vertue	19-4-87	10-5-88
Col. H. M. Repton	11-5-88	10-6-89
T. E. Ellison, Esq., I.C.S.	11-6-89	12-12-90
M. W. Fox-Strangways, Esq., I.C.S.	13-12-90	28-4-93
A. B. Napier, Esq., I.C.S.	29-4-93	1-12-93
D. O. Meiklejohn, Esq., I.C.S. ...	2-12-93	24-3-96
R. H. Ryves, Esq., I.C.S.	25-3-96	24-1-99
R. C. H. Moss-King, Esq., I.C.S. ...	25-1-99	20-12-99
R. A. B. Chapman, Esq., I.C.S. ...	21-12-99	15-11-1900
L. A. G. Clarke, Esq., I.C.S. ...	16-11-00	8-12-01
J. A. C. Skinner, Esq., I.C.S. ...	9-12-01	To date



Prepared specially for the Superintendent Gazetteer Revision, C. P., from an Original drawing supplied by him.

Helio., S. I. O., Calcutta

CHHINDWARA DISTRICT.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

BOUNDARIES AND PHYSICAL FEATURES.

Physical aspects.

1. The [1] Chhindwāra District belongs to the Nerbudda Division of the Central Provinces, and is situated on the Sātpurā plateau between 21° 28′ and 22° 49′ N. and 78° 10′ and 79° 24′ E., with an area of 4631 square miles. It is bounded on the north by the Hoshangābād and Narsinghpur Districts ; on the west by Betūl ; on the east by Seonī ; and on the south by Nāgpur and along a small strip to the south-east by the Amraoti District of Berār. The breadth of the District from the western to the eastern border is about 65 miles and its length from south to north about 85 miles. It extends from the Nāgpur plain to the edge of the Nerbudda valley. The District may be described as consisting of three steps or sections of different elevation ascending from the south. The bulk of the Sausar tahsīl lies below the Sātpurās and forms part of the Nāgpur plain, with an elevation of about 1100 to 1500 feet. North of this is a section of the regular Sātpurā plateau, forming the mālguzāri area of the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and lying at a general elevation of about 2000 feet, while north again is a stretch of wild and mountainous country often rising to 3000 feet above the sea, covered with forest, and divided into jāgīrs or hereditary estates of the old hill-chieftains.

[1] This description down to the end of paragraph 4, Scenery, is practically reproduced from Mr. Montgomerie's Settlement Report.

Hills.

2. The marked features of the hill system of the District are the range which forms the southern edge of the Sātpurā plateau, and that which rises from the central level of the plateau to the highest elevation and falls again on the north to the Nerbudda valley. Besides these certain ridges of hill are scattered about the level land. An irregular range of small hills lies along the border of the Nāgpur and Chhindwāra Districts, and a branch of it straggles north-westwards as far as the Jām river; on the north of the river the range recommences and broadens into an extraordinarily distorted mass of forest-clad hills which rises to the level of the Sātpurā plateau. To the west and east of this mass of hills lie the roads from Nāgpur to Betūl and Chhindwāra, the ascents to the plateau being steep and sudden on both roads. Beyond the Chhindwāra road to the east the line of the hills turns southwards, the Khamārpāni tract being thrown out to the south from the main bulk of the plateau. Scattered over nearly the whole of the plateau which forms the *khālsa* area of the Chhindwāra tahsil are hills, sometimes single flat-topped blunt-ended trap hillocks, but more often little irregular groups. The most level stretches are the Chaurai plain, the Chānd valley, the Saolī-Mohkher plain, and the small plain round Bhatoria. On the north of the *khālsa* area there is another line of ghāts, rather clearly defined, which for the most part forms the boundary between the *khālsa* and jāgīr areas. But to the north of Amarwāra another ascent leads up to Harrai and Gorpāni, forming the highest level of the Sātpurās, with an elevation of about 3000 feet. The long stretch which extends along this crest from east to west may by courtesy be called a plateau, but it is really a series of plateaus separated by valleys and ravines; and it is by no means an easy matter to move a camp along it. The eastern end of the range abuts on the Adegaon tract of the Seonī District. The north-east extends to Narsinghpur to which there is a sharp descent.

In the centre and west the range falls away sharply to a series of valleys only separated by slight elevations and forming altogether a low-level tract of country which extends on the north-west to within a few miles of the Piparia-Pachmarhi road.

Rivers.

3. The watershed between the Nerbudda valley and Southern India follows the highest pitch of the Sātpurās. Since the highest pitch of the Sātpurās lies from east to west in the jāgīrs on the north of the District, the general trend of the District is southwards. Only a few streams, such as the Tawā, which flows through Hoshangābād, the Shakkar, the Sītārewā and the Dudhi run northward into the Nerbudda, and all these streams rise in the jāgirs. The chief rivers of the District find their way to the south-east and eventually reach the sea on the east coast. The Kanhān rises in the north-west of the District in the Bhardāgarh jāgir and runs southwards through the western part of the Chhindwāra tahsil for about 30 miles until it reaches the head of the ghāts. In finding its way down to the Nāgpur plain, the Kanhān makes a long curve to the eastwards. It emerges into the open low country near the point at which the road from Nāgpur to Chhindwāra begins to climb the ghāts, and crossing the road runs southwards with an easterly inclination for a further 25 miles along the plain to the south-east corner of the District. The only other river of importance in the Chhindwāra tahsil is the Pench, which rises in the Motur jāgir and like the Kanhān enters the *khālsa* area of the Chhindwāra tahsīl at the north-west. Its course is then eastwards with a slight southerly inclination to the Seonī border, where it turns sharply south forming for some distance the boundary between Seonī and Chhindwāra. It has a long course of 100 miles through the Chhindwāra tahsil, but runs only 10 miles in the Sausar tahsīl. Some miles south of the District border the Pench falls into the

Kanhān, which eventually joins the Waingangā in the Bhandāra District, and so goes to the east coast. Each tahsīl has one minor river which is a feature of the country. In the Chhindwāra tahsīl, the Kulbehrā stream rising near Umreth flows towards Chhindwāra town; then turning southwards it passes through the Mohkher pargana along the top of the ghāts and after a course of over 50 miles falls into the Pench. The Jām river coming from the Multai hills flows for 50 miles through the centre of the Sausar tahsīl, passing Pāndhurnā and Pīpla, and falls into the Kanhān near Lodhīkherā. The village of Dongaria belonging to the Seonī District is situated within the borders of Chhindwāra on the north-east, adjoining the Adegaon estate.

4. The general tameness of the country is due to want of contrast. Small hills of trap formation rise abruptly from the open plain, but the characteristic length of these, great in comparison with their uniform height, dwarfs them and destroys the bold effect. The forest growth both of trees and underwood lacks richness of colour, and neither on the level nor the hill-slopes does it offer any strong contrast to the brownness of the soil. On the hills the actual sparseness of the trees prevents the light foliage from forming a mass sufficiently dense to be striking, and they have a bare appearance, which is specially marked in the ghāts which rise from the low country. The mango and mahuā, unlike most other trees, have a fine spread of foliage, and the most picturesque parts of the *khālsa* are the Umreth and Aser parganas, in which the mahuā abounds and contrasts admirably with the yellow crystalline soil. In the jāgīrs the survival of some dense forest lends variety to the scenery and even in the trap formation there is greater boldness in the shape of the hills. A deep valley with a sudden descent of 1500 feet separates the range on which the ill-fated Motur sanitarium stood from the rather higher Mahādeo plateau. In the

Scenery.

valley below is the novel and refreshing sight of the deep green of a *sāl* forest, and across the valley the precipitous southern face of the Mahādeo hills is rich in the colouring of its sandstone and carved by the action of the rain into a half-formed colonnade of pillars.

Elevation.

5. To the east of the Sausar tahsil several peaks rise to about 2000 feet, while the highest point is Sāmarboh, which is 2025 feet high. The elevation of Sausar is 1663 feet. In the hills on the north-west Narsalā is 2523 feet high, and Pathāra 2438. The main range dividing Chhindwāra and Sausar is about 2000 feet high, while Deogarh rises to 2411 feet, Dodia in the east to 2663 feet and Deor to 2929. Chhindwāra itself is 2236 feet high. Other points on the plateau are Mujāwar 2812 feet, Sonāpipri 2734, Gajandoh 2818, Chaurai 2081, and Jhilmilī 1981. The elevation of the plateau rises considerably to the west. The highest points in the jāgīrs are Khāpa 3825, Harīpathār 3858, Kālāpathār 3979, Almod 3607, Tāmia 3726, and Dumdum 3765.

GEOLOGY.

Local geological distribution.

6. The greater part of the District is covered by the Deccan trap, in which fossiliferous intertrappean sedimentary strata are met with at various localities. There are also considerable expanses of the metamorphic and Gondwāna rocks[1]. Mr. Montgomerie describes the distribution of the rocks as follows[2] :—

'East of Pachmarhī, covering that low-lying portion of 'the jāgīrs which abuts on Hoshangābād and Narsingh-

[1] The petrology and geology of the Sausar tahsīl have been recently described by L. L. Fermor (1) and P. N. Datta (2), respectively, with accompanying geological maps. (1) Notes on the Petrology and Manganese-ore deposits of Sausar tahsīl, Chhindwāra District, Central Provinces. *Rec. Geol. Surv., Ind.*, XXXIII, pp. 159—220 (1906); (2) Notes on the Geology of parts of the valley of the Kanhān river in the Nāgpur and Chhindwāra Districts, Central Provinces, *op. cit.*, *pp.* 221-228.

[2] Settlement Report, para. 9.

'pur, the upper Gondwānas are found; south of this are the 'lower Gondwānas, taking their name from Motur on the 'main hill range of the jāgīrs, and then further south 'comes a stretch of crystalline rock, extending from Betūl 'town to Chhindwāra town over the west of the Chhind- 'wāra tahsīl; a band of the same formation runs down 'south-eastwards through the centre of the Sausar tahsīl to 'join the main area of the crystalline rock which extends 'from near Mandlā past Nāgpur down to the east coast at 'the mouth of the Godāvari. Trap, it may roughly be said, 'covers the remainder of the Chhindwāra District; the east 'of the jāgīrs, the east of the Chhindwāra tahsīl including 'the Chaurai wheat-plain, the Khamārpāni block on the east 'of the Sausar tahsīl, and the western end of the same tahsīl 'all belonging to the trap formation. In Sausar the band of 'crystalline soil runs from Deogarh south-eastwards through 'the centre of the tahsīl with the same inclination as the Kan- 'hān river and extending on both sides of it. The rest of 'the tahsīl is trap except the eastern border of the Khamār- 'pāni tract adjoining the Seonī District; there and in the 'extreme south-east of the Chhindwāra tahsīl crystalline soil 'occurs and is utilised in a few villages for rice cultivation.'

The Deccan trap.

7. The Deccan trap formation consists of the usual horizontal layers of basaltic and doleritic lavas, giving rise to the flat-topped hills characteristic of this formation. In many places the flows contain abundance of cavities, originally steam holes, lined or filled with various minerals, as quartz, amethyst, calcite, agate, chalcedony, jasper and others. Interbedded with the layers of trap there are sometimes to be found thin beds, two to five feet thick, of sedimentary rocks, which to distinguish them from the lavas forming the larger proportion of the Deccan trap formation, are usually known as intertrappean beds. These beds may be either limestone, sandstone, clay or shale, which in places have been converted into porcellanite and chert. Such beds have been observed

at Butaria west of Chhindwāra and at Mislānwāra south of it, and in various other localities, and yield shells and other fossils.

Lametā rocks.

8. Lametā rocks occur to the west of Sausar and Lodhikherā where the trap abuts on the crystalline and metamorphic rocks, and also in a similar juxtaposition to the north of Rāmākonā and in the Chhindwāra tahsīl. The Lametā rocks are a sedimentary formation situated between the base of the trap and the ancient surface of the gneissose rocks. As they are very thin they crop out only along the base of the trap scarps. They are not, however, always present, so that the trap sometimes rests directly on the gneissose rocks. The usual thickness of the Lametās is about 2 to 3 feet, but in places where they are best developed they are sometimes as much as 15 to 20 feet thick. In composition the Lametā rocks are calcareous sandstones, conglomerates, grits and arkoses or felspathic grits derived from the denudation of the underlying gneisses and granites. In places they have been rendered cherty. On the hill above Sirgorā between the Barākars and the trap, there is a bed of rock not exceeding 20 feet in thickness, and consisting of a hard conglomeratic sandstone containing white quartzite and red jasper pebbles. The same rock is seen again on the hill above Bābai and on the hill on which Garhā stands. It is probably of intertrappean age.[1]

Gondwāna rocks. Mahādeva series.

9. Some of the groups of the Gondwāna rocks have been named after places in the District. The Gondwāna system corresponds to the marine older and middle mesozoic and probably the upper palaeozoic formations of other countries, and is chiefly composed of sandstones and shales which appear to have been deposited in fresh water and probably by rivers. As a general rule these rocks occupy basin-shaped depressions in the older formations, which sometimes corre-

[1] Jones' Southern Coal-fields of the Sātpurā-Gondwāna basin.

spond to the existing river valleys. Remains of animals are rare, and the few which have hitherto been found belong chiefly to the lower vertebrate classes of reptiles, amphibians and fishes. Plant remains are more common and evidence of several successive floras has been detected. The formation is divided into the upper and lower Gondwānas according to the character of the fossils found, and each of these is further subdivided into groups. In the north-east corner of the District there is a considerable spread of the rocks of the Jabalpur group, the highest division of the Gondwāna system in this part of India. The Jabalpur group consists of clays, shales, and earthy sandstones, with some thin beds of coal. The thickness of the group has not been determined with any accuracy, but as far as is known, it never exceeds 1000 feet. It appears to be conformable to the underlying Mahādevas. The Mahādeva series of upper Gondwāna rocks is so named from the Pachmarhī range which is composed of this formation. The Mahādeva rocks consist chiefly of very thick massive beds of coarse sandstone, grit and conglomerate. They are frequently ferruginous or marked with ferruginous bands. They are associated with clays and occasionally with bands of impure earthy limestones. The sandstones form high ranges of hills and often weather into vertical scarps of great height, forming conspicuous cliffs in the forest, and contrasting strongly with the black precipices of the Deccan traps and the rounded irregular masses of the more granitoid metamorphic rocks. In the typical area of the Sātpurā region the Mahādeva rocks attain a thickness of at least 10,000 feet, nine-tenths of which consist of coarse sandstone, grit and conglomerate. The Mahādeva formation has been subdivided in the Sātpurā region into three groups—the Bāgra, Denwā and Pachmarhī. No description of the Bāgra group need be given here. The Pachmarhī group consists of massive sandstones, whitish or brownish in colour and usually soft; these are the typical rocks of the Mahādeva formation already described. The

Denwā group of rocks follows the course of this stream. They present a marked contrast to the massive Pachmarhī sandstone, and are principally composed of soft clays, pale greenish-yellow and bright-red, mottled with white in colour, forming thick beds interstratified with subordinate bands of white sandstones.

Dāmuda series. Barākar group.

10. The Dāmuda series of lower Gondwāna rocks is divided in the Sātpurā area into the Barākar, Motur and Bijori groups. The whole thickness of the series is about 10,000 feet in the Sātpurā basin, and it constitutes the most important part of the Gondwāna system. The Barākars consist of conglomerates, sandstones of various kinds, shales and coal. The sandstones are often coarse and felspathic, a variety of frequent occurrence being rather massive, white or pale-brown in colour, soft at the surface where exposed and not much harder below, consisting of grains of quartz and decomposed felspar. The Barākar group furnishes the coal found in Mohpāni and the Tawā, Pench and Wardhā valleys. The coals of the Barākar group vary greatly in quality and character in the different coal-fields. They all, however, agree in having a peculiar laminated appearance, due to their being composed of alternating layers of bright and dull coal, the former purer and more bituminous than the latter, which in many cases is shale rather than coal. The best coals are those in which the bright layers predominate, but nearly all seams hitherto discovered are somewhat inferior to average European coal of the carboniferous formation, and there is a general tendency to variation in the thickness and quality of each seam within short distances.

Motur group.

11. The Motur group derives its name from the village of Motur situated in the District about 12 miles south-east of Pachmarhī on the dividing ridge between the valleys of the Denwā and the Pench. The beds of this group consist of thick, coarse, soft

earthy sandstones, grey and brown, sometimes with red and mottled clays and calcareous nodules. Shales occur, but they are usually sandy and very rarely carbonaceous. The clays are readily distinguished from all the rocks occurring among the Barākars. They are usually of a dark red claret colour, sometimes greenish or yellow, and white, the various colours being mixed in small patches, so as to give a mottled appearance to the whole rock; the white portion of the clay frequently contains a large quantity of white sand. The especial characteristic of the clays is their calcareous nature; they contain numerous small plates of argillaceous carbonate of lime, and larger nodular masses of very irregular shape disposed in horizontal layers. Where any large thickness of these clays has been subjected to denudation, as on the hill north-east of Ambāra between Hinglādevī and Barkui, and in the Pench river by Jātāchāpa and Chikhlī, the clay has been removed and the ground is thickly strewn with the nodules. The clays are also somewhat saline and exposures in cliffs and banks are much frequented by cattle and other animals, who lick up the clay with avidity and swallow large quantities of it. The water from wells sunk in the clay has also a slightly bitter taste. The clays form the greater part of the low ground through which the Pench river flows after leaving the Motur hills till it passes across on to the trap, and also of the country north of the Pench river as far as the reappearance of the trap. Going down the Rānīdoh stream from Umaria towards the Takia river, the Motur clays are again exposed for some distance. The Moturs also occupy the high ground below the trap to the north of the Kanhān field of Barākars, till they are again faulted against the Tālchers at the Tothia river for a short distance. Beyond this point the Motur Barākar boundary becomes much less distinct.[1]

[1] Jones' Southern Coal fields of the Sātpurā Gondwāna basin. Memoirs of the Geological Survey, Volume XXIV, Part I.

12. The highest members of the Dāmuda series in the Sātpurā region are exposed in the upper Denwā valley at the base of the Mahādeo or Pachmarhī hills. For the rocks of this horizon the name of Bijorī has been proposed, from a small village rendered famous by being the locality whence the only distinctly vertebrate fossil, except Brachyops, yet obtained from the Dāmuda series, has been procured. The rocks of the Bijorī horizon are characteristically Dāmudas and comprise shales, occasionally carbonaceous, micaceous flags and sandstones. A thickness of 3000 to 4000 feet of beds intervenes between the Motur beds and the base of the Pachmarhī sandstone and the greater part of this thickness may be assigned to the Bijorī group. The most important fossil hitherto found in the Bijorī beds is the specimen already referred to, which is the skeleton of an amphibian, allied to Archegosamus, and named *Gondwanosaurus bijoriensis* by Lydekker.

Bijorī group.

13. Lying below the Dāmuda series are the Tālchers, forming the base of the lower Gondwāna system. They consist mainly of greenish silt beds breaking up into small splintery fragments and hence called needle shales, and greenish brown or whitish felspathic sandstones in either of which pebbles and large boulders are often irregularly scattered. Often these are very numerous and form a distinct bed, to which the name of boulder-bed has been applied. The Tālchers are represented along the whole northern part of the District from Dāla on the Pench river west to the boundary; but east of Dāla they are completely covered by trap.

Tālchers.

14. The oldest formation is the crystalline complex. The rocks of this series, where exposed, are seen to be thrown into violent folds, so that the dips are, as a rule, very steep. The rocks of the Gondwāna system have been deposited on the denuded edges of the previously-folded

Metamorphic and crystalline complex.

crystallines and are usually found dipping at gentle angles (5°-20°), the angle of dip tending to be steeper in the southern portion of the District than in the northern. The direction of dip is on the whole southerly. The Lametās, Deccan trap and alluvium are all horizontally bedded, this being an expression of the fact that they were deposited after the last earth movements of any consequence affecting this region.

The rocks of metamorphic and crystalline complex, often referred to more simply as the metamorphic or gneissic rocks, occupy a considerable portion of the District, particularly along the valley of the Kanhān river and to the west of Chhindwāra town. Very little is known about the northern portions of the crystalline area, but a detailed account of the petrology of the crystalline rocks of the Sausar tahsīl has recently been given by Mr. Fermor.[1] This District seems to be one of the most interesting in India as far as its crystalline rocks are concerned. In the first place the variety is very great as is shown by the following list:—Granite, pegmatite, granulite, gneiss, mica-schist, hornblende schist, amphibolite, quartzite, pyroxenic gneiss, calcyphyre, crystalline limestone or marble, and finally the manganese-silicaterocks with which are associated the manganese-ore deposits of the District. Secondly the rocks afford excellent evidence, pointing to a genetic connection between the pyroxenic gneisses, calciphyres and crystalline limestones. There are also interesting examples of silicification of various rocks and minerals. For a list of the numerous minerals found in this area, reference should be made to the paper cited above. The rocks of this complex are all to be regarded as of Archæan age, whilst it is probable that a portion of them are the more metamorphosed representatives of the Dhārwārs of other parts of India.

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[1] Records, Geol. Sur. Ind., Vol. XXXIII, pp. 159—220 (1906).

BOTANY.

15. Teak is found in most forests especially below the ghāts, and is the dominant tree in several forests, while in some localities it grows nearly pure. *Sāl* (*Shorea robusta*) is found in the Denwā valley and the northern forests of the District and is the most valuable timber after teak. *Tinsā* (*Ougeinia dalbergioides*) is another important timber tree and often grows nearly pure on old abandoned fields. The *bīja sāl* (*Pterocarpus marsupium*) is also a common and valuable timber tree. It grows to a considerable height but straight stems are very rare. The *sāj* (*Terminalia tomentosa*) a large tree with long thin nearly glabrous leaves, the *dhaurā* (*Anogeissus latifolia*), the *haldū* (*Adina cordifolia*), a tall handsome tree, the *lendia* (*Lagerstrœmia parviflora*) which when in bloom is covered with clusters of small white sweet scented flowers, and the *dhāman* or *dhāmin* (*Grewia vestita*) are considered good ordinary building wood. The *shīsham* or rosewood (*Dalbergia latifolia*), the *rohan* or Indian redwood (*Soymida febrifuga*), the bark of which is much used for tanning and dyeing, the *tendū* (*Diospyros tomentosa*) of which the fruits are eaten, the *sīwan* or Indian music-wood with smooth white or whitish grey bark, rather large brown and yellow flowers, and a yellow fleshy fruit, yield ornamental timbers. Among other less valuable trees are the *semar* or cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*), tall with smooth white bark and prominent scarlet flowers appearing in March when the tree is leafless; the flower buds are eaten as a vegetable and the silky fibre obtained from the capsules is used to stuff cushions. The *salai* (*Boswellia serrata*), which grows with a straight pole to a height of 30 to 50 feet, is found in abundance. Planks are made of this wood for indoor uses only, as it soon rots if exposed to rain. It yields a gum called *gūgal* which is burnt in religious ceremonies. The young saplings are cut when they are a foot thick and left lying out through the rains to season, after which the bark

is peeled off and the timber used for building. The *kusum* (*Schleichera trijuga*) is now employed for the production of lac, though the industry is not important at present. The mahuā is very common in private forests but as the rights to the fruit of mahuā trees are not reserved to the mālguzārs, they are inclined to cut down the trees, sometimes girdling them or placing cowdung round the roots in order to obtain permission to do so. The *harrā* (*Terminalia chebula*) grows abundantly in the highlands to the north. The tree flourishes on the yellow soil overlying sandstone or metamorphic rock. The characteristic pale green foliage is very noticeable in April in the deciduous forests, when the majority of other trees are leafless. The *achār* (*Buchanania latifolia*) is found principally above the ghāts on stiff red soil. The *bhilawān* (*Semecarpus anacardium*) is another conspicuous tree with large leaves. The calyx of the flower is parched and eaten and also the seeds. The juice of the nut is used as a medicine for rheumatism and also for foot-and-mouth disease in cattle. The wood is considered useless on account of its softness and of the acrid juice which renders it dangerous to work upon. The *aonlā* (*Phyllanthus emblica*) has a feathery foliage and a grey bark which is used for tanning. Its wood is very hard and durable, particularly under water. The *anjan* (*Hardwickia binata*) is an elegant tree with bifoliate leaves and drooping branchlets. The wood is hard and extremely durable and the shoots grow very straight and are hence valuable as rafters. The *mokhā* (*Schrebera swietenioides*) is a large and common timber tree. The wood is hard and durable and takes a good polish. It is used for turning and for making combs and weaver's beams. The *beherā* (*Terminalia belerica*) is a tall tree with an erect trunk and a very large spreading head. It grows well in the Deogarh range and straight clean poles are often seen in scrub jungle on rocky ground. The bark peels off in flakes. The trunk is used to make the beam of the oil-press. The

khair (*Acacia catechu*) is common both in Government and private forests. It has a much cracked bark and short hooked spines in pairs. Gonds, who are known as Kathedās, make catechu from the wood, boiling it in water for eight days. The *kasai* (*Bridelia retusa*) is a large, thorny deciduous tree. Green pigeons are fond of its sweet fruit. The leaves are used as a medicine for worms in cattle. The *giryā* or *bhirrā* (*Chloroxylon swietenia*), also known as the Indian satinwood, is a moderate-sized deciduous tree usually growing on sandstone or limestone soil. It has bunches of white flowers which come out in April when the tree is leafless, and at this time a number of trees growing together will make a pretty show. The other common trees and shrubs mentioned in the Betūl and Seonī District Gazetteers are also usually found in Chhindwāra.

WILD ANIMALS, ETC.[1]

Tiger, panther and leopard.

16. The forests of the District are not well stocked with game and it is generally considered to afford comparatively poor facilities for sport. The bison is occasionally found in the forests on the banks of the Pench river in the south-east. It lives in the densest of jungles during the hot and cold weather months but wanders a little further afield in the rains. It may also be met with in the extreme north-west of the District near the Denwā river and in the jāgīr forests, where it lives in the most inaccessible places. The wild buffalo is not met with in the District. Tigers exist in all forests but in small numbers. During the cold and hot weather months their haunts are confined to thick jungle near rivers. During the rains owing to the extent of scrub jungle tigers wander far afield and make an appearance occasionally in unexpected places. Instances of regular man-eating tigers are rare. Panthers are fairly numerous and Mr. Brooke-Meares distin-

[1] This notice is compiled from a paper kindly furnished by Mr. Brooke-Meares, District Superintendent of Police.

guishes the two varieties. The larger and heavier, which is capable of killing a full-sized cow, is according to his observation, of a lighter colour and with clearer markings than the other. The smaller variety is of a darker colour with longer fur, and is very much lighter in build. It will climb trees and has a habit of taking its kill up into the branches of a tree and leaving it there for safety; he has not found that animals of the larger species do this. The small panther appears to be incapable of killing full-sized cattle and preys upon calves, goats and dogs. The marking of both species is of the rosette shape. According to Jerdon[1] the tail of the larger variety is only as long as the body but that of the smaller variety is as long as the head and body together. The skull of the larger animal is also longer and more pointed, with a ridge running along the occiput and much developed for the attachment of the muscles of the neck. The *chīta* or hunting leopard (*Felis jubata*) is found in the District but is very rare. Mr. Brooke-Meares has heard it several times but has not seen one himself. The animal is of a light yellow colour with black spots all over the body and with canine feet. The following description of its methods when trained to hunt black-buck is quoted from Jerdon's Mammals of India[2] :—

'Its mode of hunting the antelope has often been 'described; and I transfer an account of it from the pages 'of the Indian Sporting Review :—"On a hunting party," 'says Buchanan Hamilton, "the *chīta* is carried on a cart, 'hooded, and when the game is raised the hood is taken 'off. The *chīta* then leaps down, sometimes on the opposite 'side to its prey, and pursues the antelope. If the 'latter are near the cart, the *chīta* springs forward with 'a surpassing velocity, perhaps exceeding that which 'any other quadruped possesses. This great velocity is not 'unlike the sudden spring by which the tiger seizes its prey,

[1] Mammals of India, page 97.

[2] Pp. 115-116.

'but it is often continued for three or four hundred yards. 'If within this distance the *chīta* does not seize its prey, he 'stops, but apparently more from anger or disappointment 'than from fatigue, for his attitude is fierce, and he has been 'known immediately afterwards to pursue with equal rapi-'dity another antelope that happened to be passing. If the 'game is at too great a distance when the *chīta's* eyes are 'uncovered, he in general gallops after it until it approaches 'so near that he can seize it by a rapid spring. This gallop 'is as quick as the course of well-mounted horsemen. Some-'times, but rarely, the *chīta* endeavours to approach the 'game by stealth, and goes round a hill or rock until he can 'come upon it by surprise. This account of the manner of 'hunting I collected from the conversation of Sir Arthur 'Wellesley, who, while Commanding Officer at Seringapa-'tam, kept five *chītas* that formerly belonged to Tipū 'Sultān." Mr. Vigne writes thus:—"The hunting with '*chīta* has often been described, but it requires strong epithets 'to give an idea of the creature's speed. When slipped from 'the cart, he first walks towards the antelope with his tail 'straightened, and slightly raised, the hackle on his shoulder 'erect, his head depressed, and his eyes intently fixed upon the 'poor animal, who does not yet perceive him. As the ante-'lope moves, he does the same, first trotting, then canter-'ing after him, and when the prey starts off, the *chīta* makes 'a rush, to which (at least I thought so) the speed of a race-'horse was for the moment much inferior. The *chītas* that 'bound or spring upon their prey are not much esteemed, 'as they are too cunning; the good ones fairly run it down. 'When we consider that no English greyhound ever yet I 'believe fairly ran into a doe antelope, which is faster than 'the buck, some idea may be formed of the strides and velo-'city of an animal, who usually closes with her immediately, 'but fortunately cannot draw a second breath, and conse-'quently, unless he strikes the antelope down at once, is 'obliged instantly to stop and give up the chase. He then

'walks about for three or four minutes in a towering passion, after which he again submits to be helped on the 'cart. He always singles out the biggest buck from the 'herd, and holds him by the throat until he is disabled, 'keeping one paw over the horns to prevent injury to himself. The doe he siezes in the same manner, but is care-'less of the position in which he may hold her." The na-'tives assert that (in the wild state) if the ground is not very 'favourable for his approaching them without being seen, 'he makes a circuit to the place where he thinks they will 'pass over, and if there is not grass enough to cover him, 'he scrapes up the earth all round, and lies flat until they 'approach so near that by a few bounds he can seize on his 'prey. Mr. W. Elliott says, "they are taught always to 'single out the buck, which is generally the last in the 'herd; the *mīr-shikārs* are unwilling to slip till they get the 'herd to run across them, when they drive on the cart, and 'unhood the *chīta*."

'I have only to add to this on my own testimony, that I 'have often seen it, when unhooded at some distance from 'the antelope, crouch along the ground, and choose any in-'equality of surface to enable it to get within proper distance 'of the antelope. As to Vigne's idea of its rush being made 'during one breath, I consider it a native one and unfounded; 'and I may say the same of its holding one paw over the 'horns of the buck. The *chīta*, after felling the antelope, 'seizes it by the throat, and when the keeper comes up, he 'cuts its throat and collects some of the blood in the wooden 'ladle from which it is always fed; this is offered to the '*chīta*, who drops his hold, and laps it up eagerly, during 'which the hood is cleverly slipped on again.'

The leopard jungle cat is said to be fairly common in the District; it preys upon birds. The lynx is also found in parts but is not common. As in other Districts, the hyæna, civet-cat and jackal are common. Wolves are rarely seen, but wild dog are numerous and very destructive to

the game. Mr. Falconer-Taylor, Forest Divisional Officer, relates that on one occasion he saw a full-grown doe chītal rush past him in the forest, pursued closely by a single wild dog. Before proceeding 100 yards the dog had the chītal down, and by the time Mr. Taylor ran up to the spot, had disembowelled her and devoured the entrails, even before the chītal was quite dead. The otter is found in most of the large rivers.

Deer.

17. The usual varieties of deer and antelope are found in the forests. Sāmbhar occur in heavy jungle and formerly frequented the jāgir forests, but game has become very scarce there owing to the unrestricted shooting which has gone on till recently. Black-buck are found in the east and north-west where the country is open, but not in great numbers, and the horns do not run to more than about 22 inches. *Chinkāra* are common all over the District. The four-horned deer is also to be found in most parts and prefers a fairly dense forest.

Birds.

18. Owing to the paucity of tanks there are very few duck and snipe. The pea-fowl is common in forests bordering on rivers and is not considered sacred. The grey jungle fowl is to be found in the hills in the north of the District but is as rare as it is handsome. The spur fowl is common in the thick jungles of the northern hills. Partridge, sand-grouse and quail are to be found in certain tracts. Excellent mahseer fishing may be had on the Pench river which runs for many miles through the District, specimens weighing as much as 40 lbs. having been caught.

Deaths caused by wild animals.

19. During the fifteen years ending 1905 about 4 tigers and 48 leopards and panthers were destroyed annually on an average. During the same period a total of 158 persons and nearly 8000 cattle were destroyed by wild animals. The number of persons dying from snake-bite was

605, or nearly four times as many as those killed by wild animals.

RAINFALL AND CLIMATE.

Rainfall.

20. Rainfall is registered at the tahsīl headquarters of Chhindwāra and Sausar. Since 1902 registration stations have also been opened at Tāmia and Harrai in the jāgīrs. The fall at Tāmia is apparently very heavy, resembling that of Pachmarhī. The average annual rainfall at Chhindwāra for the 39 years ending 1905-06 was 41 inches and at Sausar 35 inches. The Chhindwāra tahsīl has thus considerably the heavier fall. The average of these two stations, which for administrative purposes is called the District average, was 38 inches, but the actual average over the District including hill sites as well as those in valleys would probably exceed this amount. Of the annual fall 35 inches are received during the five months from June to October and 3 inches during the remainder of the year. The average fall for June is 7 inches, for July 11 inches, and for August $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The wettest year recorded was in 1878-79 when 55 inches were received, and the driest was 1899-1900, when only 16 inches fell. The annual amount has been less than 30 inches only in seven years out of the 39, and has exceeded 50 inches in only two years. Generally therefore the rainfall has been remarkably regular.

Climate and temperature.

21. The District[1] contains the greatest extremes of temperature to be found in the Province. The open part of the Sausar tahsīl is like Nāgpur. On its bare plains the summer heat is severe, and the cultivator digs wells, and plants mango trees beside them for water and shade, even if he does not intend to use the wells regularly for irrigation. On the other hand, the highest range in the jāgīrs is of the same elevation as Pachmarhī, and has similar alleviations of

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from paragraph 16 of Mr. Montgomerie's Report.

heat. Motur on this range was tried in preference to Pachmarhī as a sanitarium for soldiers, but its surroundings were unattractive, and it was abandoned. The temperature of the central tract in the *khālsa* area of the Chhindwāra tahsīl is moderate, and to European ideas pleasant; but natives of other Districts of the Province find the additional touch of cold unhealthy. The headquarters station stands on gravel soil, and with its light rainfall and cool temperature is generally considered to be the most healthy in the Province.' The establishment of a fourth-class observatory at Chhindwāra was sanctioned in 1907.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY AND ARCHÆOLOGY.

History.

Inscriptions. The Vākātaka Dynasty.

22. From inscriptions on copper plates found in Seonī and Chhindwāra, combined with others in the Ajanta caves, it has been concluded that a line of Rājput prinçes, the Vākātaka dynasty, was ruling on the Sātpurā plateau from the third century, the name of the perhaps semi-mythical hero who founded it being given as Vindhyasakti. General Cunningham held that Bhāndak in Chānda was the capital of this dynasty, but his conjecture has been disallowed by Drs. Bühler and Fleet on philological grounds, and nothing definite as to its headquarters can be asserted. It is a curious fact that neither of the plates found in Seonī and Chhindwāra appear to relate to villages situated in those Districts. The Seonī grant, found at Pindrai, refers apparently to villages in Chānda, and the plate discovered at Dudhia in Chhindwāra to territory in the Amraoti District of Berār. Both of these plates relate to grants by Pravarasena II of the Vākātaka line, and another plate of the same king granting the village of Charmānka in the Ellichpur District[1] was turned up by the plough in the fields of that village itself, now known as Chammak. This establishes the fact that Ellichpur was included in the territories of Pravarasena II, and was probably identical with the Bhojakata Province, in which Charmānka is stated in the inscription to have been situated. The Chhindwāra plates relating to a grant by the same king were obtained from some Gonds in the village Dudhia of Aser pargana by Mr. C. W. Montgomerie when Settlement Officer, and a notice of them by Dr. Kielhorn is

[1] Now abolished as a separate District and included in Amraoti.

published in the Epigraphia Indica[1]. Of this inscription, my Assistant, Mr. Hīra Lāl, remarks as follows :—

'The villages of the Dudhia grant are stated to be 'situated in the Arammi Province, which, in all probability, 'was somewhere close to the Bhojakata Province or Ellich-'pur District. I identify it with Arvī, a tahsīl of Wardhā 'District, which is only about fifty miles from Ellichpur. 'Arammī might become Aramī, Arabī,[2] Arvī, the change 'from *b* to *v* being characteristic of the Marāthā country. 'The other places mentioned in the grant are Chandrapur, 'Hiranyapur, Karmakār and Darbhamalak. I identify 'Chandrapur with Chāndur, a tāluk of the Amraoti District 'adjoining Arvī, Hiranyapur (golden town) with Songaon 'near Chāndur, and Karmakār with Kalamgaon, *l* and *r* 'being recognised in Sanskrit grammars as interchangeable 'letters. The people still remember that Chāndur was 'formerly called Chandpur. Chandrapur is described in the 'inscription as a *sangamikā* or meeting of two rivers, and 'the junction of the Chandrabhāgā and Saraswatī streams 'is situated at the distance of a mile from Chāndur. The 'only place thus left unidentified is Darbhamalak, which 'may either have since disappeared or may have originally 'been only waste land, *darbha* signifying *kusha* grass'. Mr. Hīra Lāl's identification seems ingenious and satisfactory, and though it does not show that Chhindwāra itself was included in the Vākātaka territory, the fact that these grants were discovered on the plateau, and its proximity to Arvī and Ellichpur render this highly probable. General Cunningham[3] gives the boundaries of Vākātaka as the Mahādeo range on the north and the Godāvari river on the south with the Ajanta hills on the west, and those at the sources of the Mahānadi on the east. But his deductions

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1 Volume III, page 258.

2 Cf Narmadā and Narbadā.

3 Records of the Archæological Survey, Volume IX, page 121.

from inscriptions are, Dr. Fleet states, of doubtful authority.[1] Little is known of the dynasty except the names of ten princes, and the fact that they contracted alliances with other and better known ruling houses. Dr. Bühler placed the date of Vindhyasakti about A.D. 275. Fleet holds that Devagupta, who is mentioned in an inscription as the father-in-law of Rudrasena II, the fifth Vākātaka king, was a king of Magadha, who reigned about A.D. 675. According to Dr. Bühler, therefore, the dynasty would have lasted from the end of the third to the middle of the sixth century, and on Dr. Fleet's hypothesis from the fifth to the eighth century, allowing twenty-five years for the reign of each king. Pravarasena II, whose copper plates were found at Dudhia, was the son of Rudrasena II and was the sixth king of the dynasty. But although Bhāndak has been held by some to have been the capital of the Vākātakas, the Chinese pilgrim, Huen Tsiang, visited the Chānda District in 639 A.D., but does not mention them, and it seems improbable, therefore, that their kingdom can still have been in existence at this time.

The Gaur kingdom.

23. Chhindwāra may have subsequently formed part of the kingdom of Gaur, the classical term for part of the United Provinces and Bengal. The kings of Western Gaur are mentioned several times in early inscriptions, and their territory is supposed to have embraced the Sātpurā plateau One Gupta, king of Gaur, is reported to have defeated and killed the king of Kanauj, who was invading Mālwā with 10,000 horse in A.D 606. General Cunningham derives the name of the Gonds from this Gaur kingdom, subsequently, he thinks, known to the Muhammadans as Gondwāna.

The Rāshtrakūta kings.

24. The south of Chhindwāra, at any rate, was probably included in the dominions of the Rāshtrakūta Rājput dynasty, whose capital was at Mālkhed in Hyderābād, and whose dominions extended from the Vindhya mountains and

[1] Gupta Inscriptions, page 234, note 5.

Mālwā on the north to Kānchi on the south. Copper plate grants belonging to this dynasty have been found at Multai in Betūl and at Deoli in Wardhā. The Deoli plate is dated A.D. 940 in the reign of the king Krishna III; it records the grant of a village named Tālapurumshaka in the Nāgapura-Nandivardhan District to a Kānarese Brāhman. Among the boundaries of the village that was granted there are mentioned :—On the south the river Kandanā, Kanhanā or Kandavā; on the west the village of Mohamagrāma; and on the north the village of Vadhrīra; and these have been identified by Dr. Bhandārkar with the river Kanhān, the modern Mohgaon in the Chhindwāra District, and the modern Berdī in the vicinity of Mohgaon. Mr. Hīra Lāl further identifies Nandivardhan with Nagardhan in Nāgpur.[1] Thus the south of Chhindwāra probably belonged to the old Nāgpur-Nandivardhan District of the Rāshtrakūta kingdom. An inscription found on a pillar at Nīlkanthī in Chhindwāra recites that Krishna was king at the time when it was built; and a second fragmentary inscription forwarded by the Deputy Commissioner to Mr. Hīra Lāl calls him king Krishna of the Lunar race. The Rāshtrakūtas are shown in the later records as the descendants of Yadu of the Somvansa or Lunar race[2]. Nīlkanthī is about 40 miles from Mohgaon, near which Tālpurumshaka was situated. The entrance of the temple is still standing, and its architecture is plainly mediæval Brahmanic or of the style of the Rāshtrakūta architecture, so that there can be little doubt of the identity of the Krishna mentioned in the inscriptions with the third king of the Rāshtrakūta line. The supremacy of the Rāshtrakūtas, who have been conjecturally identified with the Rāthor Rājputs, began about 750 A.D. and lasted for two centuries and a quarter. During their predominance the Kailāsa temple at Ellorā was built. 'The impression

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[1] Mr. R. H. Craddock's Nāgpur Settlement Report (para. 27) states that the old name of Nagardhan was Nandivardhan.

[2] Bombay Gazetteer, I, part II, page 383.

'made on their contemporaries by the Rāshtrakūtas, the 'Balharas' or Vallabha Rais of Arab historians, was 'evidently considerable, and was justified by the achievements of their period. Although the art displayed at Ellorā 'is not of the highest kind, the Kailāsa temple is one of the 'wonders of the world, a work of which any nation might 'be proud, and an honour to the king under whose patronage it was executed. Many other temples were the outcome of the royal munificence and literature of the type 'then in fashion was liberally encouraged'.[1] Rāshtrakūta simply means Rāj-kul or the royal family, and the native name of Mahārāshtra for Bombay is not improbably derived from this dynasty, *mahā* being a prefix and meaning great. The Rāshtrakūtas were overthrown about 973 A.D., but the Nāgpur country was apparently held by a prince of the line in subordination to the Chālukya Rājput dynasty until the end of the 11th century.

The Gond Princes of Deogarh. Jātba.

25. Nothing except conjecture can be stated as to the history of Chhindwāra from this time until the rise of the Gond kingdom of Deogarh. It may probably have been included in the Gond or Gond-Rājput kingdom of Kherlā in Betūl. In 1398 the Persian historian, Firishta, states that Narsingh Rai, Rājā of Kherlā, had great wealth and power, being possessed of all the hills of Gondwāna and other countries.[2] The Kherlā kings became subordinate to the Muhammadan Bahmani dynasty of Gulbargā and Sholāpur, and finally Kherlā was annexed to Mālwā in 1433. It is doubtful, however, whether the conquests of the Mālwā kings extended into Chhindwāra. Deogarh, the headquarters of the old Gond dynasty of Chhindwāra and Nāgpur, is a fortress about 24 miles south-west of Chhindwāra, picturesquely situated on a crest of the hills. For a short period towards

[1] V. A. Smith's Early History of India, page 328.

[2] Briggs' Firishta, volume II, pages 370—376.

the end of its existence, the Deogarh kingdom became of such importance as to overshadow those of Mandlā and Chānda and to take first place among the Gond states. Of its earlier history, practically nothing is known, but here, as elsewhere, popular tradition tells of a Gaolī kingdom preceding the Gonds. The semi-mythical Gond hero Jātba,[1] who founded the dynasty, was born from a virgin under a bean-plant, and was protected by a cobra, which came and spread its hood over him during the heat of the day, when his mother left him to go to her work. When he grew up he went to Deogarh and took service under the twin Gaolī kings, Ransur and Ghansur, whose favour he gained by the feat of lifting the large castle gate off its hinges with his bare hands. He was ordered to slaughter the buffalo at the next Diwāli festival, but was distressed as to how he should do this, having no weapon but a wooden cudgel. The goddess Devī, however, appeared to him in a dream, and told him that when the moment came, his stick would change into a sword of the finest temper, and that after slaughtering the buffalo he should jump on to the royal elephant, kill the kings and establish himself in their stead. All this came to pass as the goddess directed. Jātba has the character of a popular hero, because he belonged to the Gonds, the indigenous race of the country, and freed them from their foreign Gaoli kings. And this deliverance is no doubt held to excuse his questionable conduct in killing his masters by treachery. This Jātba is apparently mentioned in the Ain-i-Akbarī, which would show that he was ruling in 1590. The passage relating to him is found in the description of the Kherlā Sarkār and is as follows[2]:—'To 'the east of this (Kherlā) resides a Zamindār named Chātwa '(historically Jātiba or Jātwa), who is master of 2000 'cavalry, 50,000 foot, and more than 100 elephants. Wild

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[1] Jāt is the Gondī word for the *semī* or country bean.

[2] Jarrett's Ain-i Akbari, volume II, page 229.

'elephants are found in this country. The chiefs were always 'tributary to the kings of Mālwā; the first to the Governor 'of Garh and the others to the government of Hindia'. Again in referring to the statement of revenue it is noted: 'The revenue of 22 parganas of the Sarkār of Kherlā, held 'by Chātwa and some few other zamīndārs, is not included'. Kherlā had been made a Sarkār of the Mughal Empire, subordinate to the Sūbah of Berār, probably shortly before 1600 A.D. The neighbouring territory of Chhindwāra held by Jātba and other zamīndārs was nominally included in the Kherlā Sarkār, but as it paid no revenue, appears to have been at this time practically independent. Later, however, in 1720, Deogarh is said to have formed a separate Sarkār, comprising territory now included in Nāgpur and Chhindwāra. Jātba is said to have built the Deogarh fort and also those of Pātansaongī and Nagardhan below the hills. But the existing remains at Deogarh are in the Muhammadan style, and were, no doubt, constructed by Bakht Buland after his visit to Delhi. Mr. Craddock[1] records a local tradition, according to which Deogarh was originally a Gaolī kingdom and was conquered by Sarbashā, a Gond king of Garhā. Jātba, known as Ajānbāhu Jātbashā, was eighth in descent from the founder of the dynasty, and was so called because of the length of his arms, his fingers reaching to his knees. It is said that the Emperor Akbar, in whose reign he ruled, came to Deogarh, and that he himself visited Delhi. The kings before Jātba, whose names are mentioned in the tradition recorded by Mr. Craddock, may probably be dismissed as figments of the fancy of some Brāhman chronicler who wished to invest the house of Deogarh with a longer and more dignified pedigree. Jātba himself was clearly only a petty local zamīndār and may be taken as the first authentic member of the line.

Bakht Buland.

26. Bakht Buland was the third or fourth in descent from Jātba and was reigning in 1700 A.D. This prince went to Delhi and

[1] Nāgpur Settlement Report, page 14.

entered the service of the Emperor Aurangzeb. The story goes that he performed some signal exploit and gained favour, and that the Emperor induced him to abandon the rites of Bhīmsen and to adopt the Muhammadan faith, on which he was acknowledged as Rājā of Deogarh under the name of Bakht Buland. Appreciating the spectacle of the civilisation and wealth of the Mughal Empire, he determined to set about the development of his own territories. It was at this time that the Nāgpur country received a great infusion of Hindu cultivators and artificers, who were tempted away by him from their homes with liberal grants of land. Sir Richard Jenkins says of him that 'He employed 'indiscriminately Musalmāns and Hindus of ability to intro- 'duce order and regularity into his immediate domain. 'Industrious settlers from all quarters were attracted to 'Gondwāna, many thousands of villages were founded, and 'agriculture, manufactures and even commerce made con- 'siderable advances. It may with truth be said that much 'of the success of the Marāthā administration was owing to 'the ground work established by him'. Bakht Buland added to his dominions from those of the Rājās of Chānda and Mandlā, acquiring from the latter, who then ruled at Chaurāgarh, possession of Seonī, Katangī, Chhapāra and Dongartāl, which were held for him by a relative, Rājā Rām Singh. Partābgarh and Sāngarhī in Bhandāra were conquered for him by Rāj Khān, a Pathān adventurer, whom Bakht Buland had selected as governor of Dongartāl in Seonī; and his territories comprised the modern Districts of Chhindwāra and Betūl, and portions of Nāgpur, Seonī Bhandāra and Bālāghāt. The plateau and plain country were known respectively as Deogarh above and Deogarh below the Ghāts. Bakht Buland usually resided in Deogarh except when absent on military expeditions. But he established the modern city of Nāgpur on the site of some hamlets then known as Rājāpur Bārsa. At this time the kingdoms of Chānda and Deogarh were attached to the

Sūbah of Berār, and an officer had resided at one of the hamlets then existing on the site of the present city of Nāgpur for the purpose of collecting the tribute on the part of the Faujdār of Paunār. Towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign, when the empire was enfeebled by his long wasting wars against the Marāthās, Bakht Buland seized his opportunity and plundered the Mughal territory on both sides of the Wardhā. The Muhammadan historian of the Deccan, Kāfi Khān,[1] states that the Emperor on being informed of this conduct of Bakht Buland, ordered that his name, which had the meaning 'Of high fortune' should be changed to Nigūn Bakht or 'Of mean fortune'; and that he also sent Prince Bedār Bakht with a suitable force to punish him. Nothing however is known to have come of this undertaking.

Fall of the Deogarh dynasty.

27. The next Rājā of Deogarh was Chānd Sultān, who resided principally in the country below the hills, fixing his capital at Nāgpur which he made a walled town. He continued the liberal policy of his predecessor and under him the wealth of the country so increased as to make it a desirable acquisition to the great predatory Marāthā power already established in Berār. On Chānd Sultān's death in 1739, Walī Shāh, an illegitimate son of Bakht Buland usurped the throne and Chānd Sultān's widow invoked the aid of Raghujī Bhonsla of Berār in the interest of her sons Burhān Shāh and Akbar Shāh. Raghujī on being called in by the contending Gond factions replaced the two sons of Chānd Sultān on the throne from which they had been ousted by the usurper, and retired to Berār with a suitable reward for his assistance. Dissensions however broke out between the brothers, and in 1743 Raghujī again intervened at the request of the elder, Burhān Shāh, and drove out his rival. But he had not the heart to give back a second time to the weaker Gond the country he

held within his grasp. Burhān Shāh, the Gond Rājā, though retaining from motives of policy on Raghujī's part the outward insignia of royalty, became practically a state pensioner and all real power passed to the Marāthā chief. With this event the history of the Deogarh kingdom may be said to have ended and thenceforward Chhindwāra formed part of the Bhonsla kingdom of Nāgpur. Burhān Shāh's descendants have continued to occupy the position of state pensioners to the present time, and the representative of the family resides at Nāgpur with the title of Rājā, being called Sansthānik, to distinguish him from the Bhonsla family.

Marāthā rule.

28. It is unnecessary to record here the history of the Bhonsla kingdom in detail. Up to 1803 the Marāthā administration was on the whole a good one and the country prospered under their rule. The first four of the Bhonslas were military chiefs with the habits of rough soldiers, connected by blood and by constant familiar intercourse with all their principal officers. Descended from the class of cultivators they ever favoured and fostered that order, and though rapacious were seldom cruel to the people. Up to 1792 their territories were seldom the theatre of hostilities, and the area of cultivation and revenue continued to increase under a fairly equitable and extremely elementary system of government. But in 1803, Raghujī II united with Sindhia against the East India Company. The two chiefs were decisively defeated at Assāye and Argaon, and by the treaty of Deogaon of that year Raghujī ceded to the British Cuttack and Southern Berār. From this time the Marāthā administration was characterised by reckless extortion. Raghujī had been deprived of a third of his territories and attempted to make up the loss of revenue from the remainder. The districts were mercilessly rack-rented and many new taxes imposed. The pay of the troops was in arrears and they maintained themselves by plundering the cultivators, while at the same time commenced the raids of the

Pindāris, who became so bold that in 1811 they advanced to Nāgpur and burnt the suburbs. It was at this time that most of the numerous village forts were built, to which on the approach of these marauders the peasant retired and fought for bare life, all he possessed outside the walls being already lost to him. At the same period the Gond hill chiefs, finding a favourable opportunity, came down from their mountain fortresses and plundered and harassed the country without restriction. In 1818, after the battle of Sītābaldī, Appa Sāhib, the treacherous Bhonsla prince who had attacked the British, was deposed and forwarded to Allahābād in custody. On the way however he corrupted his guards and escaped to the Mahādeo hills, where he was joined by the fugitive Pindāri leader Chītu. They were well received and supported by the Gond chiefs, and an attempt was made to capture Deogarh, which was held by a British detachment. The hostile forces assembled at Laundī, a village ten miles west of Deogarh, but were easily dispersed by a British force. The Jāgīrdār of Sonpur, Chain Shāh, also appeared before the castle of Chaurāgarh in Narsinghpur, with 2000 men. He was defeated and captured by some troops under Major O'Brien and with him the fortunes of Appa Sāhib collapsed and he escaped to the Punjab.

British administration during the Regency.

29. During the minority of the Rājā Raghujī III the Nāgpur territories were administered from 1818 to 1830 by Sir Richard Jenkins, and Captain Montgomery was made Superintendent of Chhindwāra. He had before him the difficult task of restoring order and confidence among the people after years of anarchy and misrule, accompanied by a considerable emigration and abandonment of land. The following is the summary which he gave of the results of his management :—' In conclusion ' I have only to add that those hilly and mountainous tracts ' held by the Gond tributaries, where murders and thefts ' were neither accounted criminal nor sinful ; through which

'before our management no individual of respectability 'could pass in safety, if at all; from which hordes of banditti used to be poured down on the fertile valley of the 'Nerbudda and the *havelī* lands of Betūl and Seonī to 'plunder and distress their more peaceful inhabitants, to 'drive off their herds and rack and burn their villages; 'these are now the abode of comparative contentment and 'industry, and I may with truth, confidence and satisfaction 'assure you that a great change has been effected. Population has been partially restored and is gradually increasing; 'no traveller or stranger has fallen a victim for six years 'to the cupidity of the lawless freebooters; no complaint 'has been made against the inhabitants by my neighbours 'of the Honourable Company's territory who are on three 'sides of me; cultivation is improving and comfort is 'evident among them; and they profess openly their 'preference for the life they now lead to that from which I 'had little hope of ever winning them.' In 1830 the young Rājā Raghujī III was allowed to assume the actual government. He died without heirs in 1853 and his territories were then declared to have lapsed, Chhindwāra thus becoming British territory. The District was generally undisturbed during the Mutiny, but the Zamīndār of Harrākot or Raikherī rose in revolt when Tantia Topi's force crossed the Nerbudda and entered the Sātpurā hills in 1858. His estate was confiscated and ceased to be a jāgīr. The bulk of it was settled on the mālguzāri system and transferred to Hoshangābād, and some waste villages were included in the Borī teak forest.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

Archæology.

30. The archæological remains are of very slight interest. The District is singularly bare of notable buildings, even important shrines being represented only by a *chabūtra* or platform and not by a temple. The oldest buildings are probably the ruins of the Nīlkanthī temples, of which

nothing now remains but the entrance to the main building. These appear to be in the mediæval Brahmanic style and to belong to the period between the seventh and the twelfth centuries. A pillar standing by the roadside contains an inscription with the name of king Krishna III, of the Rāshtrakūta dynasty, who flourished about the eighth century. Another fragmentary slab inscription has recently been discovered, which also mentions this king. The sculptured stones placed on the Ashburner tank at Chhindwāra were brought from Nīlkanthī. Two old temples exist at Mohgaon, one of these having been constructed about three centuries ago. The most interesting buildings in the District are those of Deogarh, situated on a spur of the southern range of the Sātpurās, about 24 miles south-west of Chhindwāra. These consist of a wall enclosing the summit of an isolated hill about half a mile long and 150 to 200 yards wide with deep valleys on each side. Within are some stone tanks and buildings, the principal being the Bādal Mahal or cloud palace and the Nagār Khāna or entrance gate. In the valley below are the tombs of the Gond kings. All the buildings except the arches are of brick. Local tradition ascribes the construction of the fort to Gaolī princes who preceded the Gonds, but the existing remains are in the Muhammadan style and may be attributed to Bakht Buland, who lived about 1700 and visited Delhi.[1] The names of various hills as Haryāgarh, Garjāgarh and others preserve the memory of the unsettled times when they were crowned by the strongholds of Gond freebooters, but all traces of these have now vanished. A copper-plate grant of the sixth century was found at Dudhia in the Chhindwāra tahsil and has been referred to in the history of the District.

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[1] See also Gazetteer article Deogarh.

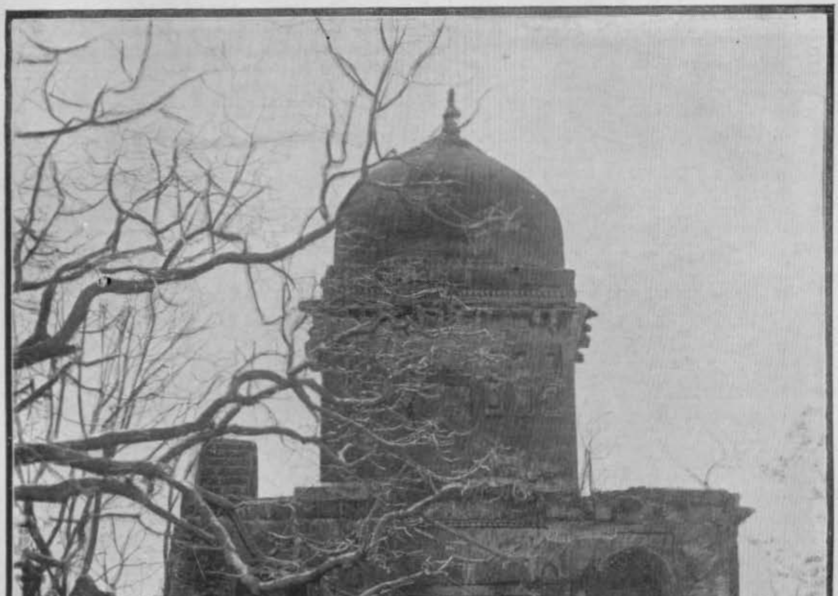


Photo Etching Roorkee College.

BUILDING KNOWN AS NAGARKHANA IN DEOGARH FORT.

CHAPTER III.

POPULATION.

STATISTICS OF POPULATION.

Statistics of area and population, density, towns and villages.

31. The area and population of the District in 1901 were 4631 square miles and 407,927 persons respectively. Chhindwāra ranks fifth in area and tenth in population among the Districts of the Central Provinces, excluding Berār. The District is divided into two tahsīls, of which Chhindwāra, with an area of 3528 square miles and a population of 286,779 persons, lies to the north, and Sausar, with an area of 1103 square miles and a population of 121,148 persons, to the south. The Chhindwāra tahsīl has thus more than three-fourths of the area and seven-tenths of the population of the District. The density of population is 88 persons per square mile as against 114 for British Districts of the Province. Chhindwāra is more sparsely populated than any Districts except Mandlā, Nimār, Betūl and Chānda. Excluding the jāgīrs, which contain only 38 persons per square mile, the density of the Chhindwāra tahsīl is 117 persons and of Sausar 110. The most thickly populated part of the District is the Sausar Station-house area with a density of 203 persons excluding Government forest, while the figures for the other Station-houses in 1901 were :—Chhindwāra 164, Pāndhurnā 156, Umreth 152, Chaurai 148, Amarwāra 124 and Bichhua 123, the figures being for the village area in each case. In 1901 the proportion of cropped area per head of population was 2 acres, this being one of the highest averages in the Province. The District had four towns and 1751 inhabited villages according to the census of 1901. The village lists show 1984 towns and villages, of which 176 are uninhabited. The numbers are being

increased by the settlement of ryotwāri and forest villages. In 1905 there were 87 of the former and 10 of the latter. The villages are, as a rule, small, and in 1901 the proportion containing less than 40 houses or 200 persons was 65 per cent. The four towns are :—Chhindwāra (9736), Pāndhurnā (8904), Mohgaon (5730) and Sausar (4785).

All of these except Mohgaon are municipalities. The urban population has increased steadily if slowly since 1881, and in recent years its growth has probably become more rapid. Chhindwāra and Pāndhurnā are the most prosperous towns. In 1891 Lodhīkherā was classed as a town, having a population of more than 5000 persons, but in 1901 it had fallen below the limit. At this census the following four villages contained more than 2000 persons :—Lodhīkherā (4181), Pīpla Narainwār (3254), Berdī (2737) and Mohkher (2160), while 31 villages had more than 1000 persons.

Urban and rural population.

32. Mr. Montgomerie writes as follows on this subject :—
'In the sparsely populated jāgīrs there 'is no town. In the rest of the Chhindwāra tahsīl, as it is purely agricultural, 'no town has arisen, except at the headquarters, Chhindwāra. 'In the Sausar tahsīl cultivation has long been at a high 'pitch and the open plain is fully populated. The result 'has been the establishment of several small towns in 'which bankers and traders live. These places, however, 'would not have risen in rank from village to town, but 'that the cultivators of neighbouring villages prized the 'facilities for society and trade to be obtained from living 'in a small town sufficiently to neglect the additional 'produce to be obtained from their fields by constant 'supervision on the spot. In the west of the tahsīl there 'is one town, Pāndhurnā. In the centre are Mohgaon, 'the former headquarters of the tahsīl, and Sausar, the 'present headquarters, which has only a small population. 'Further east is the town of Lodhīkherā. This is the only 'manufacturing town in the District. Cloth and brass

'vessels are made, both of an ordinary useful quality. 'Neither trade is flourishing, but the weavers have suffered 'from competition more than the brass-workers. The 'villages of the District show a marked sign of material 'progress. Writing in 1867, Mr. Ramsay commented on 'the "almost complete absence of tiles" in roofing 'houses. At the present day tiles are commonly used for 'roofing by well-to-do tenants, and it is only in remote 'and wild parts that thatch alone is to be seen. The 'tiles' made are of an inferior flat pattern and sell at '1000 or 1200 to the rupee. The potters live in large 'villages and occasionally travel round the country making 'tiles where they are wanted. The villages are still as he 'described them, the Hindu villages in clumps of houses 'separated by narrow lanes, the Gondī villages on both 'sides of a broad street with a garden lying at the back 'of each house. On the east of the Chhindwāra tahsīl, 'where villages of the Hindu type prevail, the house gardens 'are small, and, as a rule, no rent is paid. On the west, the 'gardens attached to villages of the Gondī type are large 'and highly prized, and rent is often paid. It is also a 'common practice for the holder of a garden to pay 40 'heads of maize or a hen, virtually as rent for his house 'garden. In the Chhindwāra tahsīl, the rule is that each 'village area has a village site within it, so that a non-'resident tenant is the exception. In the Sausar tahsil, there 'is a distinct tendency among cultivators to cluster together 'in large villages which form the centre of half a dozen 'uninhabited village areas. The practice probably arose '80 years ago, when the Pindāri raids occasionally ravaged 'the south country; then the possession of a mud fort, 'capable of protecting men and cattle from sudden raiders, 'made a village a desirable place of residence. The forts 'are in ruins and the occasion for self-defence has passed, 'but the custom of flocking together in large villages has 'survived the necessity for it, since the custom which arose

'because safety was otherwise impossible has continued 'because comfort was found to ensue.'

33. In 1866 the area of the District was 4255 square miles. In 1867 the Bordehī tract, with an area of 160 square miles and 85 villages,[1] was transferred to Betūl. At the settlement of 1867, the Chhāter and Bāriām-Pagāra jāgīrs and some villages from the Pachmarhī jāgīr were transferred to Hoshangābād. The Adegaon estate, which was formerly a jāgīr, with an area of some 200 square miles, was transferred to the Lakhnādon tahsīl of Seonī and 32 villages were transferred to the Seonī tahsīl. The exact details of the changes of territory are not now available, the records being conflicting. Mr. Ramsay wrote in the 30 years' Settlement Report[2] (1869):—'Politically the 'District was divided into four tahsīls, but by recent 'arrangements the number of tahsīls has been reduced to 'two, one comprising the whole of the country below the 'ghāts and the small pargana of Khamārpāni, and the 'Chhindwāra tahsīl embracing the rest of the District. To 'effect these changes and for greater compactness of outline, 'a number of villages have been transferred to the 'surrounding Districts.' The headquarters of the Sausar tahsīl were at one time at Mohgaon, but were fixed at Sausar before 1872, this town probably being selected owing to its position on the road. In 1872 the area of the District had decreased to 3916 square miles and was practically the same in 1881, but in 1891 it was shown as 4630 square miles, and this change was apparently due to correction of survey, as there is no record of transfers of territory during the decade. Between 1891 and 1901 a small interchange of forest area was made with Nāgpur and

Transfers of territory.

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[1] This number is given by Mr. Standen in the Betūl Settlement Report, para. 174. It is reported from the Chhindwāra District Office that 136 villages were transferred.

[2] Paragraph 15.

in 1903 the villages of Māli and Sāngākhedā, of the Bāriām-Pagāra jāgīr were transferred from Hoshangābād to Chhindwāra and those of Binorā, Sankri and Kamat Dhāna of the Almod jāgīr from Chhindwāra to Hoshangābād.

Variation in poulation.

34. A census of the District has been taken on five occasions. The enumeration of 1866 was made before the transfers of territory already recorded. The population enumerated in 1872 was 316,000, but the census was considered to be inaccurate, especially in the jāgīrs. In 1881 the population was 373,000, giving an increase of 18 per cent. on 1872. The growth of population deduced from vital statistics during the decade was 10 per cent. The population recorded in 1891 was 407,000, giving an increase of 35,000 or 9 per cent. on the figures of 1881. This was nearly equivalent to the Provincial average, the decade having been generally prosperous. The birth-rate during the decade was 42 per mille or the fifth highest in the Province, and the death-rate 34 per mille or the sixth highest. In 1901 the population was nearly 408,000 persons, having increased by 433 since 1891. The census disclosed noticeable variations in different parts of the District, the Chhindwāra tahsīl *khālsa* having an increase of 3·6 per cent. and the Sausar tahsīl of 0·6, while the jāgīrs declined by 11·8 per cent. In the famine of 1897 the small millets in the jāgīrs failed, while the rest of the District was comparatively prosperous, but in 1900 the whole area was severely affected by famine. There was probably some immigration from the jāgīrs into the Chhindwāra tahsīl in both years. During the decade the birth-rate was 42 per mille in the *khālsa* portion of the District or the highest in the Province, while the death-rate was 41 per mille or the eighth highest. The registration of vital statistics was first introduced into the jāgīrs in 1901. Since 1901 there has been a rapid growth of population, the average birth-rate for the years 1901-05 having been 56 and the death-rate 29.

The excess of births over deaths was 45,000 and the deduced population at the end of 1905 was 450,000.

Migration.

35. In 1901, of the total population 15 per cent. were recorded as having been born outside the District, this figure being exceeded in only three other Districts of the Province. The bulk of the immigrants came from Seonī and Nāgpur and next to these Districts from Betūl. Emigration takes place to the same Districts.

Diseases.

36. Captain Chapman, I.M.S., writes as follows of the health of the native population:—'The seasonal prevalence of diseases 'in Chhindwāra District is much the same as in other 'parts of the Province and is to be ascribed to the same 'causes. At the outset of and through the course of 'the rains, disease of the abdominal organs is prevalent, 'and during the latter part of the rains and the beginning 'of the cold weather malarial fever increases largely 'in amount. This seasonal epidemic corresponds with 'the period in which mosquitoes have the best oppor-'tunities of breeding. Cases of enlarged spleen among 'children are however not common. Malaria is most severe 'in the jāgīrs. With the advent of the cold weather, 'diseases of the respiratory tract become common. The 'infant mortality is at this time always high and is due 'to capillary bronchitis and other kindred disorders. The 'last four months of the year are the most unhealthy.' Cholera has appeared in the District in 19 years out of the last 36, but severe epidemics have occurred only in years of famine. Small-pox has practically always been present but rarely in epidemic form, the number of deaths from it having exceeded 100 in only four years out of the last thirty-six. The highest number of deaths reported from this disease was 538 in 1870. Plague appeared in the District in 1904, the first outbreak being at Mohgaon. This town experienced a fairly severe epi-

demic and the disease gradually spread to the surrounding villages. In 1904 a total of 382 deaths were reported from the disease and in 1905 there were 913. In 1901 the District contained 103 lepers, of whom 81 were males and 22 females.

Occupation.

37. The District has as yet no important industries. A few ginning factories have been opened in the Sausar tahsīl, but these do not work for more than four or five months in the year and only employ sixty or seventy persons apiece. The Pench Valley Coal Mines are now working in the Chhindwāra tahsīl and employ two or three hundred labourers, while the manganese mines in Sausar may give work to four hundred. These industries are not as yet sufficient to exercise any appreciable effect on the returns of occupation, though they have sufficed, in conjunction with the extension of cotton cultivation, to effect a large increase in the wages of daily labour. The proportion of the total population engaged in agriculture according to the census of 1901 was 71·6, as against the Provincial average of 72·7. Personal servants contribute 2 per cent. of the population, and about 4 per cent. are engaged in the preparation and supply of articles of food and drink. Fishermen are an important constituent of this class and next to these come persons concerned with milch-cattle. In the country the Gūjars sell milk from door to door just as the Gaolīs do in the towns; and they keep buffaloes and trade in *ghī*. Among purveyors of vegetable food, grain-dealers are the chief class. Other occupations are grinding and parching grain and selling flour and parched gram. Workers in cotton number 15,000 or 3·7 per cent. of the population, and about 1½ per cent. are workers in metals and precious stones. Lodhīkherā was formerly the principal manufacturing town, and cloth and brass vessels, both of an ordinary useful quality, were made here. Both industries

have now however largely declined. More than 4500 beggars were returned in 1901.

Language statistics. Hindī.

38. The chief languages used in the District are Hindī, Gondī and Marāthī. Gondī is spoken in the jāgīrs where Gonds are chiefly found, Hindī in the central tract, especially the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and Marāthī in the south, mostly in the Sausar tahsīl. Hindī is spoken by about 53 per cent. of the population, Gondī by 25 per cent. and Marāthī by 19 per cent. Two per cent. speak Korkū. The proportion of Marāthī speakers in Sausar is 49 per cent. of the population. The prevalent dialect of Hindī is Bundelī, which is spoken by 185,000 persons. Bundelī is allied to Urdū, which is returned by 4000 persons from the District as their language. Bundelī differs from Urdū in some points of inflection. In Bundelī the long *a* forming the termination of substantives is changed into *o* as *ghoro* for *ghorā*. *Chhindwāro baut thando jilo hai* for *Chhindwāra bahut thandā zilā hai* (Chhindwāra is a very cold District). The change is also made in the participial form of verbs as *khao* for *khāyā*. Another tendency is to leave out the aspirate if it is not the initial letter of a word, as in the instance quoted above *bahut* becomes *baut*. Similarly *gahirā* deep becomes *gaira*, *lahar* (wave) *lair*, *mahsūl* (tax) *māsūl*, but *hal* (plough), *hāt* (market), *hathyār* (implement) remain as they are, the initial *h* being retained. The *ko* of the oblique case is also changed to *e* as *ham dukāne jāt* for *ham dukān ko jāte hain* (I am going to the shop). If the root of a verb ends in long *a* it is changed into *ai* to form the verbal noun, as *khaibo* for *khānā*. In the future the termination *gā* is not used in Bundelī and the Gujarāti termination *shai* altered into *hai* is substituted, as *u na darhai* for *woh na daregā* (he will not fear). The past tense of the substantive verb, *thā*, *the*, is changed to *hato*, *hate*, as in *tū jāt hato* for *tū jātā thā* (thou wast going) and the long *a* in the termination of the participle is shortened, as in the foregoing example where

jātā becomes *jāt*. In Bundelī as in Urdū the particle *ne* is added to transitive verbs, and in this respect it differs from Eastern Hindī. Another dialect spoken in the District is Bhoyarī. It derives its name from the Bhoyar caste, who number about 17,000 persons. Bhoyarī is a form of Rājasthāni Hindī, which this caste spoke in their original home in Mālwā, but which has now become much corrupted by intermixture with Marāthi and Western Hindī. Another caste dialect called Katiyai after the Katias, and spoken by about 6000 people, is, like the Bhoyarī, a sub-dialect of Rājasthāni Hindi.

Marāthī and other languages.

39. Marāthī is spoken by 77,000 persons. It is the Nāgpurī dialect, which in all essential points agrees with what is called Berāri. The chief peculiarities of this dialect are the following :—Long vowels and especially final ones are very frequently shortened, as *mī* and *mi* (I) *mādzhā* and *mādzha* (my). *V* is very indistinctly sounded before *i*, *ī*, *ē*, and it is often dropped altogether, as *isto* for *visto* (fire), and *īs* for *vīs* (twenty). The neuter gender, which is thoroughly preserved only in Marāthī and Gujarāti, is somewhat weakened by frequently combining it with an adjective in the masculine gender, for instance *tsānglē mānsa* (good men), is joined to a masculine adjective *tsānglē*, and so on. In verbs the second person singular has usually the same form as the third person, thus *tū āhe* (thou art) for *tū āhes*. The habitual past is often used as an ordinary past ; thus *to mhane* (he said) for *to mhanālā*. *L* and *n* are continually interchanged in the future tense, as *mī mārīn* and *mārīl* (I shall strike). Gondi is spoken by 104,000 persons or 76 per cent. of the Gond population and Korkū by 8000 persons or 43 per cent. of the Korkūs.

RELIGION.

Statistics of religion. Village gods.

40. The statistics of religion show that Hindus constitute 62 per cent. of the population, Animists 35 per cent., and Muhammadans 2 per cent. There are 1558 Jains and 474 Christians. Of the forest tribes, the Gonds are

generally considered as Animists, while the Korkūs, who worship Mahādeo and respect the life of the cow, are held to have been admitted into the pale of Hinduism. Practically however the beliefs of both as well as of the lower Hindu castes, consist largely in the deification of the spirits of forests, hills, and inanimate objects of all kinds. Among the village godlings, who are reverenced by the rural population, Māroti or Hanumān is the chief. He must be installed whenever a new village is founded, and he is annually worshipped by the mālguzār with great ceremony. Tuesday and Saturday are the days sacred to him. Māta Māi, the goddess of small-pox, is represented by a number of rough stones indented like a honey-comb to resemble the pit-mark of small-pox, which are collected and placed under the sacred *nīm* tree (*Melia indica*). Water is poured over them and taken home and given to the children to drink. When a child has small-pox, the father sometimes puts on a pair of handcuffs, and with a pot containing fire on his head, proceeds to worship the goddess. The sisters of Māta Māi are Marhai, the goddess of cholera, Khokhlī, the goddess of coughing and Jarhai (from *jar* or *jwar*), the goddess of fever. These with three others, who are not commonly known, are considered as the seven sisters, all being forms of Devī. Bhīmsen is the brother of Māta and accompanies her when she enters the person of anyone in the house, and is manifested by small-pox. These two deities are more revered than all others, because their manifestations are more terrible. Women offer to Māta the *kunkū* or red powder which they place on their foreheads and *missī* or tooth-powder, as these two articles are used by married women and not by widows. They also offer her a yellow *cholī*, this being the colour worn at marriages. Men offer to Bhīmsen the *kardorā* or thread which they wear round the waist, and tobacco and liquor, so that he may enjoy it with them, and *madak* and *gānja* smokers give a little of their drugs. Muthia Deo is the divine watchman and is

represented by a stone daubed with vermilion and placed at the meeting of the village roads. He is worshipped when the crops are cut. Holerā Deo is the post to which cattle are tied in the court-yard, and he protects them from harm. He is generally worshipped by the Gonds. Asrā is the goddess of water and lives near rivers. The milk of a cow or buffalo after calving is offered to her for the first three days, as if this is not done, she will drink the milk and the animal will become barren.

Village gods—continued.

41. Ghor Deo is the locust deity, from *ghorā*, a name for a locust. Clay horses are offered to him. The people think that the locusts stay in Mahādeo's hill by Pachmarhī, and when he is angry, he sends them out to wreak destruction on the crops. When a plague of locusts occurred in Sausar in 1905, people went bare-footed to the shrine of Devī in Amraoti and brought sanctified water to sprinkle over the crops. But neither this nor the efforts of Government, they say, were of any avail, and the plague raged for three months, until on the festival of Devī in Ashwin or Kunwār all the locusts vanished mysteriously in one night and did not reappear. Wāghoba is the spirit of a man who has been killed by a tiger, a platform being always erected to such unfortunates in the belief that if this is not done, they will lead the tiger back to the village to secure further victims. When a native *shikāri* sits up over the body of a maneater's victim, he sometimes ties the legs and arms of the corpse to its sides in the belief that if left free it will raise its arm and point at the hunter to warn the tiger away. Banjāri Deo is the god of travellers and is located on the roads at the foot of steep ascents; travellers offer him a cocoanut on coming to the hill, so that their carts may not break down in climbing it. Khandobā is an incarnation of Mahādeo, who was born in a field of millet near Poona, and led the people against the Muhammadans in early times. He had a watch-dog who warned him

of the approach of his enemies, and he is named after the *khānda* or sword which he always carried. The dog is worshipped in his honour by the Marāthās and Dhangars.

Festivals.

42. On the 15th day of Shrāwan (July—August) artisans worship their implements and do no work. The Dhīmars go and throw their fishing-nets over their patrons' heads and receive a small present. Stilts are worn from this time until the day of Polā. At the Nāg Panchamī festival five days afterwards, some curious customs are still observed among Brāhmans, which will be related in the article on that caste. Schoolmasters take their boys to a stream and there they wash their slates and worship them and then come back and eat sweetmeats. On the Polā festival in Bhādon (August—September) the cattle are washed in the morning and their horns are decorated with different kinds of designs. On the third day after Polā the Teli women go out and bring back branches of the thorny shrub called *mārbod* or *nārbod* (*Asparagus racemosa*), and sweep out the house with it. They then collect the sweepings in a pot saying, 'Oh Mārbod, remove all diseases, fevers, coughs, bugs, fleas and mosquitoes'; the sweepings are then thrown into the road or at four cross-roads, and they think that this will keep the house free of insects. The Koshtīs and Māngs take drums and go out of the village, until they find the *mārbod* creeper and they sit by it and take food together. In some places cowdung cakes, charcoal and *bhilawān* nuts[1] are placed in a pot with cowries and thrown outside the village with the same idea, and gamblers pick up the cowries, and think they will be lucky. On this day the wife of every farm-servant must go and grind some juār in the house of her master for luck, and for this she receives a present of one or two pounds of grain. On this day the boys take their stilts outside the village and burn them.

[1] *Semecarpus anacardium*, the marking-nut tree.

The walking on stilts, while the crops are being sown, is probably done with the object of making the corn grow as high as the stilts. Swinging is another pastime indulged in at this special period, probably with the same object. 'In 'the Vosges mountains the sower of hemp pulls his nether 'garments up as far as he can, because he imagines that the 'hemp he is sowing will attain the precise height to which 'he has succeeded in hitching up his breeches; and in the 'same region another way of securing a good crop of hemp 'is to dance on the roof of the house on Twelfth Day. In 'Swabia, and among the Transylvanian Saxons, it is a com-'mon custom for a man who has sown hemp to leap high in the 'field in the belief that this will make the hemp grow tall.'[1]

Festivals. Dasahra, Diwāli, Holī.

43. On Dasahra in Kunwār (August—September) the jāgīrdārs collect all their relations and dependents and march out of the village with horses and elephants, firing guns, to pay reverence to the *shami* tree (*Bauhinia racemosa*). The leaves of this tree are taken to represent gold and are distributed in commemoration of the fact that Ceylon, which was supposed to be built of gold, was conquered on Dasahra. On the 15th day of Kunwār, when the moon is full, the Marāthā Brāhmans sometimes stay awake all night, as they believe that on this night nectar falls from the moon. Pots of milk are put out to catch it and afterwards drunk. This festival is especially observed in honour of the first-born son or daughter. The child is bathed and given new clothes to wear, and Brāhmans and other relations are invited to dine. On the 12th day of Kārtik (October—November) the marriage of the *tulsī* (*Ocymum sanctum*) plant with the image of Krishna is celebrated. A miniature marriage shed is made with stalks of sugarcane and juār, and the jar in which the image of the *tulsī* plant is kept is painted in colours. Then after sunset a Brāhman repeats the texts used at a wedding. The ceremony typifies the

[1] The Golden Bough I., page 36.

union of nature as represented by the plant with the fertilising principle which is deified in Krishna. At Diwāli the Ahīrs dance and sing songs, carrying sticks, on the top of which a peacock's feather is placed. A man of the Mehrā caste makes an image of mud which is named Gango, and places it in a shed of leaves. The people come and throw grains of urad at it, and some offer pice which are taken by the maker of the image. At the end of the festival a Mehrā takes it away and throws it into a river. On the festival of Shivrātri, on the 15th day of Phāgun (February—March), the people keep fast all night and offer flowers, sandal paste, rice and leaves of the *bel* tree (*Aegle marmelos*) to Mahādeo. On the following day those who have not gone to one of Mahādeo's temples proceed outside the village and pick up some lime pebbles; these they worship, supposing them to be sanctified by the touch of the feet of the people who have gone on pilgrimage. The pile of wood for the Holī festival is collected several days beforehand. The small boys of the village gather the fuel, stealing any loose pieces of wood they find lying about. The Gond and Banjārā women go round the village on a frolic, and if they meet any well-to-do man, stop him and make him give them a present before they let him go. After the Holī a rich man will sometimes give a feast called *kusumbā*. He sends his invitations round to different villages by presenting a piece of betel-vine to the mukaddam, and this includes all the residents of the village. The people assemble at night after eating the evening meal at home and the host provides *bhāng* for them to drink. They then form two parties and sing against each other, the performance sometimes lasting for hours. Towards morning the host implores them to stop, because if they go on till daybreak, he will have to provide a meal of cakes and sugar for them. When the *Amāwas* or fifteenth day of the month falls on a Monday, it is specially observed as a festival by women. They will walk 108 times

round a pīpal tree, and then present 108 mangoes or other fruits to a Brāhman, choosing a different fruit on each occasion The number 108 signifies a little over a hundred and conveys the idea of 'full measure and flowing over'; in the same manner, when a ceremonial present is to be given, a rupee and a quarter is always taken as the amount rather than a rupee. On the first five days of Chait, following the Holi, members of the artisan castes, such as the Sonār, Kasār, and Lohār are sometimes forbidden to work under penalty of being put out of caste. During this period they worship Devi and the implements of their callings.

Gond gods and religious observances.

44. The following description of the religion of the Gonds is quoted from Mr. Tawney's note in the Provincial Census Report of 1881 :—'The worship of the Gonds 'may be summarised as being that of the gods presiding 'over the village destinies, the supposed powers of evil, 'the spirits of their fathers, and the weapons and creatures 'of the chase. The village gods are nearly all common 'property of the Gonds and low Hindus, and generally 'consist of one or more stones placed at convenient 'distances from the village, under the shade of some 'appropriate tree. In almost every house there is a ready 'reference set of gods called in bulk Chhotā Deo, and individually sometimes going by the same names as those 'worshipped on special occasions at the *Deo-khallā*, or 'Gods' threshing floor (of which there are from 10 to 20 in 'the District), and sometimes bearing special names, such as 'Dhan Thākur, Dhan Gopāl, Sakrai, Dulhā Deo, etc., 'according to the taste and fancy of the worshippers. These 'household gods have a tendency to increase, as special 'occasions necessitate the addition of a new god; and once 'he is enthroned in the house he never seems to leave it of 'his own accord. Thus if a man is killed by a cobra, the 'latter becomes a household god, and is worshipped for 'many generations. Hence the number and names of the

'domestic gods vary from village to village, and often from 'house to house, and there is no saying what set of gods 'may be expected to be in any dwelling. If a set of gods 'does not work satisfactorily, they are also, some or all of 'them, discarded, and a new lot introduced. The forms of 'these gods also vary considerably, the only constant thing 'about them being the vermilion with which they are d ubed. 'They are sometimes all earthen cones, and vary from that 'to miniature wooden tables. With these gods are wor-'shipped the spirits of deceased ancestors who have received 'a formal introduction to the Gond pantheon. I may 'mention that it is somewhat difficult to get a Gond 'either to confess that he has any household gods or to 'show them. The best way is to send off the father of the 'family on some errand, and then to ask his unsuspect-'ing wife to bring out the gods. You generally then 'get them on a tray, and some of the villagers will 'help her to name them. The Bhumkās or Gond priests 'also seem somewhat shy of showing the gods at the *Deo-'khallā*, or regular worshipping place, which has a priest 'always attached. The gods there are generally tied up in 'grass and fixed in the fork of the *sāj* tree, or buried in 'some recess in the forest, except Pālo, who is put in a bag 'to prevent his getting wet, and Chawar, who is a cow's 'tail. Perhaps they have some reason for not being too 'free in showing their gods; for not long since a young 'scamp of a Musalmān, having determined to put to a test 'the reputed powers of the Gond gods for evil, hid himself 'in a tree near the *Deo-khallā*, and having noticed where 'the gods were hidden, got down when the worshippers 'had gone, took them out, and bag and baggaged the 'whole lot of them into a well. However, when I went 'there, the Bhumkā at Mujāwar, after some parley, retired 'into the forest, and came out quite confidingly with an 'armful of gods. The *Deo-khallā* gods are generally all 'of iron, and those at Mujāwar were all spear-shaped,

'except Ghangrā who is of bell-metal, and in form like the 'bells ordinarily put round the necks of bullocks. When a 'spear-head has been lost and another is not available, any-'thing in the shape of a pike or spear will do, and it does 'not appear to make any difference so long as iron is the 'metal used. Women may not worship at the *Deo-khallā*; 'and six-god worshippers only worship at a *Deo-khallā* 'with 6 gods, and seven-god men at one with 7 gods. The 'collection of gods at a *Deo-khallā* is called Barā Deo or 'the great god, and when a Gond swears by Barā Deo, he 'swears by all the Gond gods of his sect. The most con-'stant gods at a *Deo-khallā* are probably :– (1) Pharsī Pen, 'the battle axe god; (2) Matiyā, the great god of mis-'chief; (3) Ghangrā, the bell god; (4) Salle; (5) Pālo, the 'representative of animals; and (6) Chawar, the cow's tail, 'which last is probably worshipped as a pleasing remini-'scence of feasts on deceased bullocks. Besides these there 'are divers gods and goddesses which may be found, most 'of them with Hindu names, such as Dhan Bāi, Purbia, 'Sakrai and others, and the list which I have got is a 'somewhat long one. It is, however, clear enough that 'the original gods were, with the exception of Ghangrā, 'hunting-weapons and representations of animals, and 'names have been subsequently adopted from the Hindu 'pantheon, and given to them by the priests. I do not 'know how the bells have found a place among the 'gods; their use to a primitive people is not apparent. 'Of all the gods the most remarkable probably is 'Pālo. He is made of cloth, and acts as a covering 'for the spear heads at the time of worship. The one 'I saw was a small cloth, about 2½ feet by 1½, and in 'the form of a shield. It is a very expensive god this, 'and costs from Rs. 50 to 80, its intrinsic value 'being, at the outside, Rs. 5. When a new one is required, 'it has to be made by a Katia or Rāj-Pardhān, who observes 'certain ceremonies while it is being worked. Thus, he

'has to live in a separate house, and is not allowed to go 'near his own till its completion. He also is not allowed to 'wear any clothes while he is working, or to smoke, drink 'water, eat, etc. If he does any of these things, he must 'leave off working for the day. While engaged on the cloth 'he is well fed by the Gonds, and supplied with fowls and 'spirits; it is not surprising therefore that the god is never 'finished in 6 months, though I would engage to make one 'in a week. When ready, it is taken to the *Deo-khallā* and 'a great worship is held, during which blood is seen to flow 'from the figures on the cloth, and they are supposed to 'be endued with life. The figures on the cloth are very 'rude, being embroidered in coloured silk, with a stitch or 'two of red silk in each animal to subsequently represent 'blood. The worker puts in whatever animals he recollects; 'and the chief figures I saw were a bullock, some sort of 'deer, a gouty-looking snake, with a body as thick as the 'elephant's, and the latter animal barely distinguishable 'from it by having two legs and a trunk'.

45. Muhammadans. Muhammadans number 12,000 persons, of whom 2000 reside in Chhindwāra town. They have nearly 100 villages and so are an important landholding class locally, and include two old families of some standing. The Sisgars or glass-makers and Pinjārās or cotton-carders, though nominally Muhammadans, have Hindu names. Their women practise Hindu customs, and a little time back they performed their marriages both by Hindu and Muhammadan rites. But they circumcise their male children. Their women do not wear the Muhammadan pyjāmas, but the Hindu skirt and breast cloth. Occasionally Hindus are converted to Islām, but the explanation is, as a rule, that they have been put out of caste for living with a Muhammadan woman. The Muhammadans commonly marry two wives. They will not take water from very low castes, and Muhammadan women will not take food from the same dish as

converts from Hinduism, though they will eat together in different dishes. In making ablutions a Muhammadan washes his face and hands first and then his feet, and a Hindu washes his feet and then his face and hands. Muhammadans use earthen vessels for household purposes much more than Hindus. Their women attend marriages, but they must wait for their food until the men have finished, and this may be for hours, so that the dinner may last all night before the women have finished eating. Women eat very slowly and take much longer than the men. If anything runs short, men take no notice, but the women make reflections on the want of provision and go on asking for the thing that has run short. Hindus and Muhammadans will attend each others' marriages, the Hindus cooking their own food which the host buys for them. The five cardinal duties of a Muhammadan are first the *kalmā* or confession of faith; second the *nimāz* or saying his prayers five times a day; third the *rozā* or fasting during the month of Ramzān; fourth the *zakāt* or almsgiving; if his property is as much as 52½ tolās of silver, he should give one-tenth of his income annually in charity, but if it is less than this, he need not give anything; and lastly the *Haj* or pilgrimage to Mecca. A Muhammadan should not theoretically wear ornaments other than a silver ring which is sufficient to purchase a day's food, and if he wears gold or silver ornaments when saying his prayers, their efficacy is supposed to be destroyed. Their women often wear little rings and leaves of gold all down the edges of their ears, and in the nose have a large ring on one side, a button on the other, and a small ring hanging from the centre. The local Muhammadans think it a religious duty to kill a large lizard or chameleon whenever they see it. They say that when Abrāham was taken by some enemies who wanted to burn him, the pile refused to take fire. Then the lizard came and blew on the flames and made them burn. So they bear an eternal enmity to this animal. Both

Muhammadans and Hindus join in celebrating the Muharram, and the Hindus worship the *tāzias* or representations of the tomb of Husain. Formerly only men who had made vows and especially those who were without a son dressed up as tigers during the Muharram. But now anybody does it in order to make money. Others dress up as *fakīrs* or beggars and go round asking for alms, which they afterwards offer to the *tāzias*.

Christians.

46. Christians numbered 474 in 1901, of whom 19 were Europeans and Eurasians, and the remainder natives, the number of natives having increased from 49 in 1891 to 455 in this year. A mission was established in Chhindwāra by the Free Church of Scotland in 1869, and in 1885 was handed over to the Evangelical National Missionary Society of Stockholm, by whom it is maintained, the members belonging to the Lutheran Church of Sweden. The Society supports four stations at Chhindwāra, Amarwāra, Sejā and Bijorī near Tāmia. At Chhindwāra it maintains large orphanages for boys and girls, and an Anglo-vernacular middle school and primary schools in the town. It has outstations at Umreth, Gangīwāda, and Sarnā in charge of native assistants. Sejā is a village bought by the Mission for the benefit of the children in its orphanage. The station at Bijorī has recently been founded for work among the Gonds. Chhindwāra is in the Anglican Diocese of Nāgpur and is visited by a Chaplain from Kamptee. It is in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Nāgpur.

CASTE.

Principal castes.

47. Of the whole population Gonds constitute 34 per cent. and Korkūs 5 per cent., while there are a small number of Bharia-Bhumias. Eight of the nine jāgīr estates belong to Rāj-Gonds, who derive their title from the rulers of Deogarh. The unproductiveness of their hills and forests and the natural strength of the country preserved them from

that entire subjection to the Marāthās to which the chiefs in other quarters were brought. In the jāgīrs Gonds form more than two-thirds of the entire population. Other numerous castes are the Ahīrs, constituting 8 per cent. of the population, Mehrās 8 per cent. and Kunbīs 5 per cent. Next to the Gonds the principal landholding castes are Brāhmans, Ahirs, Muhammadans and Raghuvansīs. The tenants are generally Gonds, Kunbīs, Ahīrs, Bhoyars, Lodhīs and Brāhmans. Kunbīs, Telis, Mālis and Gonds are usually employed as farm-servants. The Chhindwāra tahsīl, outside the jāgīrs, is populated principally by immigrants from the north-west who came through Narsinghpur, while in Sausar there is a strong Marāthā element from the adjoining territories of Nāgpur, Wardhā and Berār.

Brāhman.

48. Brāhmans number 8000 persons or 2 per cent. of the population and hold nearly 250 villages, being the largest landowners next to Gonds. Many Brāhmans also are patwāris. They belong to the Kanaujia and Mahārāshtra subdivisions, representing immigrants from the north and south, and include also a number of Mālwi and Bhagore Brāhmans, who originally come from Mālwā, but now arrange their marriages only among their fellows in the Central Provinces and Berār. The Marāthā Brāhmans will take food cooked without water from the Mālwis but do not regard them as very orthodox. The Bhagore Brāhmans are perhaps the oldest members of the caste resident in the District, and are usually the village priests. Some curious customs are said to be observed by the local Brāhmans on the Nāg Panchami day. They must not cut vegetables with a knife on this day but only with a scythe, and they may not eat bread baked on a girdle. The priest comes to each house early in the morning and tells the owner to arise, bathe, make himself good food and eat. But if anybody goes before the priest and tells him to do anything ridiculous, as to take his bedding under his arm and walk out of the village, or to bathe in cold

water, or weep, he is bound by custom to do it. It is also considered necessary that every guest who eats in the house on that day must be branded behind with a burning stick, which the host does stealthily when he is not looking. These customs are now falling into abeyance. When a boy is born to a Brāhman a bell is rung, but if it is a girl a *thāli* or plate is beaten.

Rājput.

49. Rājputs number 9000 persons and hold about 150 villages. These figures include the Raghuvansīs, who have now derogated from the rank of Rājputs, and are considered as a separate caste on a level with Kurmīs and Kunbīs. They marry among themselves, whereas a true Rājput must take his wife from another sept than his own. The Raghuvansīs say that they came originally from Ajodhyā and are the descendants of Rājā Raghu of the Solar race, to whose line the great Rāma belonged, but the other Rājputs say that they are the descendants of some old chieftain by a woman of low caste. They do not disdain to drive the plough with their own hand, and they will eat their food in the field, and not only on the hearth after its purification as other Rājputs do. They allow the marriages of widows and invest their sons with the sacred thread at the time of their marriage, instead of performing the proper thread ceremony. Some discard the cord after the ceremony is over. At their weddings they combine the Hindustāni custom of walking round the sacred pole with the Marāthā one of throwing coloured rice on the bridal couple. Sometimes the Raghuvansīs have what they call a *gānkar* wedding. At this, flour, sugar and *ghī* are the only kinds of food permissible, large cakes of flour and sugar being boiled in pitchers full of *ghī*, and everybody being given as much of this as he can eat. The guests generally overeat themselves, and as weddings are celebrated in the hot weather, one or two may occasionally die of repletion. This the host considers as evidence of the complete success of his party. Such a

marriage feast may cost two or three thousand rupees. After the wedding the women of the bride's party attack those of the bridegroom's with bamboo sticks, while these retaliate by throwing red powder on them. The Sūrajvansīs are another degraded caste of Rājputs who now marry among themselves. Some of them permit widow-marriage, while others do not, and the former are nicknamed Pātkaryās after the name of the ceremony, which is called *pāt.* The Rājputs are generally good cultivators, Mr. Montgomerie says, and specially the Raghuvansīs, who formerly lived in clans holding villages on *bhaiā-chāri* or communal tenure. As mālguzārs they are very prone to absorb tenant land into their home farms. The Raghvīs of the Sausar tahsīl were formerly identical with the Raghuvansīs in Chhindwāra, but have now adopted a larger proportion of Marāthā customs. The Raghuvansīs are considered as somewhat quarrelsome. Though fond of comfort they combine a good deal of thrift with it, and the clannish spirit of the caste prevents any oppression of Raghuvansī tenants by a landlord or moneylender of their own body.

Bania.

50. Baniās number 4000 and own nearly 100 villages. Since 1881 the numbers of this caste in the District have doubled. There are several subcastes, both Jain and Hindu, and coming both from the Marāthā country and from Rājputāna. The Marāthā Baniās are usually Saitwāls and Lingāyats and these are often engaged in cultivation. The Lingāyats were originally a sect devoted to the worship of Siva, but have now developed into a subcaste marrying among themselves. They wear always the phallic sign of Siva enclosed in a little metal casket round the neck or on the arm. The Saitwāls are Jains by religion and call themselves Bīspanthis as they worship idols. The Audhias call themselves Sāktas and worship Devī. Unlike other Baniās they eat flesh, but do not drink liquor, and they usually bury the dead. The Parwārs and Charnāgars come from Bundel-

khand and are Jains. The Mahesrīs come from Mārwār. At the Holi festival the Mārwāris make an image of mud and set it up, calling it Nāthurām. They mock and throw mud at it and beat it with their shoes and make merry for two or three days and then break it up. The men and women make two parties and throw dirty water over each other, and the women beat the men with strips of cloth. When a girl is born the Mārwāris break an earthen pot to show their evil fortune, but on the birth of a boy they beat a brass dish.

Ahīr.

51. Ahīrs constitute 8 per cent. of the population and own more than 100 villages. The bulk of them are concentrated in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, though the best grazing grounds are in the Khamārpāni tract of Sausar. Most of the Ahīrs belong to the Nandbans subcaste and trace their descent from the mythical king Nand, of whom the god Krishna was the adopted son. As a rule they do not employ Brāhmans for religious ceremonies and have their own caste priests, called Laganias. The Lingāyat Ahīrs abstain from eating flesh and drinking liquor and are reckoned higher than the others. The Ahīrs are stout and stalwart physically but are looked on as bad-tempered and stupid.

Kurmī and Kunbī.

52. The Kunbīs and Kurmīs are the regular cultivating castes of the Deccan and Northern India, and occupy the same position, the names being sometimes used as interchangeable by outsiders. The Kunbīs have 60 villages and the Kurmīs about 30. The stronghold of the Kunbī caste is the cotton-juār country of the Sausar tahsīl and of the Kurmīs the Chaurai wheat plain. Most of the Kunbīs belong to the Tirole subcaste, who consider themselves as superior to the others and claim that their ancestors were Rājputs who came from Therol in Rājputāna and took to cultivation. Others however say that they derive their name from their cultivation of the til plant. Other sub-castes are the Dhanojes, who are believed to be connected

with the Dhangars or shepherds of the Marāthā country; the Lonhāres who derive their name from Lonār Mehkar, a place in Berār, where there is a well-known salt lake; the Baones who are so called from the term Bāwan Berār, given to Berār when it paid fifty-two lakhs of revenue, as against only eight lakhs paid by the Jhādi or hill-country; and the Khaires who take their name from the *khair* tree, from which they formerly prepared catechu. There is also a small subcaste of Kunbīs called Gadhao, because they formerly kept donkeys, though they no longer do so; they are looked down on by the others who will not even take water from their hands. The Kunbis permit the marriage of a sister's son to a brother's daughter though not *vice versa*, and this custom has given rise to the proverb '*A to gharī bhāsi sūn*' which means, 'At a sister's house the brother's daughter is a daughter-in-law.' The sister claims it as a right and not infrequently there are quarrels if the brother decides to give his daughter to somebody else. At their marriages the fathers wash the feet of the bride and bridegroom and then the relatives throw *akshata* or rice coloured with vermilion on the couple. The bridegroom must wear a blanket on his way to the wedding. A bachelor who wishes to marry a widow must first go through a mock ceremony with an *akrā* or swallow-wort plant. This is a well-known common plant growing on waste land, and in some places parents are said to poison children, whom they do not desire to keep alive, by rubbing its juice on their lips. The Kunbis, except the Baone subcaste, breed and eat fowls, and they also drink liquor, though not to excess. The Kunbī is a great believer in ghosts and spirits and any illness is ascribed to their influence. They get a Brāhman's cast-off sacred thread and folding it to hold a little lamp, wave this to and fro. If it moves in a straight line they say that the patient is possessed by a spirit, but if in a circle that his illness is due to natural causes. In the former case they

promise an offering to the spirit to induce it to depart from the patient. The Brāhmans, it is said, try to prevent the Kunbīs from getting hold of their sacred threads, because they think that by waving the lamp in it, all the virtue which they obtained by their repetitions of the Gāyatrī or sacred prayer is transferred to the sick Kunbi. They therefore tear up their cast-off threads or sew them into clothes. The Kurmis belong chiefly to the Sanaurhia subcaste, which derives its name from some locality in the United Provinces. The Kurmīs do not eat fowls and they do not permit the marriage of first cousins.

Lodhī, Kāyasth, Kirār.

53. The Lodhis number 9000 persons and hold about 60 villages. They come from Northern India and the bulk of them are Jāngra Lodhīs, apparently deriving their name from the same source as the Jāngharā Rājputs of Rohilkhand, a turbulent set who were defeated by Shahāb-ud-dīn Ghorī. The Lodhis reside principally in the Chhindwāra tahsīl and as cultivators rank with the Kurmīs. They are now peaceful cultivators, though they have not altogether lost their independence of character. They will not grow *san*-hemp, safflower or indigo, though, like other castes, they may be conquering their repugnance to hemp now that its cultivation has become so profitable. The Kāyasths, though insignificant numerically, own about 40 villages, and the Marāthās also have a considerable estate of about 90 villages, but the bulk of these are owned by the Bhonsla family of Nāgpur. The Kirārs have about 30 villages. They are quarrelsome but are reckoned as good cultivators. They have no prejudice against growing garden crops like garlic and onions, but have hitherto objected to *san*-hemp. The Kirār is considered to be of encroaching tendencies and a proverb says of him 'A Kirār in the village is like a *gurār* tree (*Acacia cassia*) in the jungle', because this tree is believed to oust other species where it grows.

54. The gardening castes are the Mālis and the cognate caste of Marārs in the Marāthā country, and the Kāchhis. Only one Māli owns a village, as the caste appear to have no capacity for the management of property and seldom acquire it. Most of the Mālis will not cook turmeric though they have no objection to growing it. And to account for this objection they relate the story that a Māli once had a calf called Hardulia, and one day he said to his daughter 'Haldī pakā' or 'Cook turmeric.' But the daughter thought that he said 'Cook Hardulia,' so she killed and roasted the calf, and in consequence of this her father was expelled from the caste and his descendants are the Ghāse subcaste, these being the only Mālis who will cook turmeric. Ever since this happened, the shape of a calf may be seen in the flower of turmeric. The Kāchhis are another gardening caste from Northern India, so called because they grow vegetables in the *kachhār* soil or sandy stretches left bare in the beds of rivers. They are the true vegetable growers and generally live in villages with exceptional facilities for irrigation such as Ubhegaon, or with a ready market for vegetables like Umreth. Their gardens are usually of small extent, highly rented and planted with a succession of different vegetables[1].

Māli and Kāchhi.

55. The Bhoyars number 17,000 or 4 per cent. of the population and hold about 40 villages. The principal subdivisions are the Ponwār and Dholewār Bhoyars. The Ponwārs say that they are the descendants of some Ponwār Rājputs who were defending the city of Dhārā Nagarī or Dhār when it was besieged by the Emperor Aurangzeb. They were set to defend the western part of the wall, but they gave way and fled into the town as the sun was rising and it shone on their faces. Hence they were called Bhoyar from a vernacular word *bhor* meaning 'morning',

Bhoyar.

[1] Chhindwāra Settlement Report, 1891-95, para. 52.

because they were seen running away in the morning. They have now entirely abandoned Rājput customs and rank lower even than the ordinary cultivating castes as Kurmīs and Kunbīs. But there is little doubt that their ancestors did come from Rājputāna, probably in the 15th century with Hoshang Shāh. Their *bhāts* or genealogists still reside at Ujjain, and they speak a corrupt form of the Mālwī dialect, which is named after them Bhoyarī. The men are generally well-built and of light colour and the women are good-looking. The Dholewārs are said to have come from Dholā in Mālwā. The Bhoyars do not wear the sacred thread, while they drink liquor and eat fowls and pork. Their marriages generally take place at an early age and infants of one or two months old are sometimes given in marriage. Occasionally contracts of betrothal are made for children still in the womb provided they turn out to be of opposite sex, and in token of the contract the wombs of the mothers may be touched with vermilion. A bride-price called *dej* is usually paid and consists of Rs. 5 in cash with 12 *kuros* of grain and 8 seers of *ghī* and oil. They invite their dead ancestors to come and participate in the marriage by offering them the flowers of the *akrā* or swallow-wort plant. The family god is also present, being placed in an earthen jar with a burning wick. The Bhoyars all get married on the Akshaya Tritīyā day in the month of Baisākh (April-May). A Mehrā is asked to fix the date as a formality, and this custom indicates some connection between the Bhoyars and Mehrās, as between the Ponwārs and Gonds. The celebration of marriages on the same day saves expense as the number of guests at each is largely decreased. On the night before the wedding all the bridegrooms of a village go out and have a dance with their friends outside. Like the Mehrās who worship the hide of a cow or bullock filled with water, the Bhoyars make an image of flour in the shape of a bullock and resting it on four sticks put water in it and worship it. The

Bhoyars are said to be abstemious in their weddings and if they think that there is not enough food, all of them hold their hands over their plates and say 'No, I have had enough.' They permit widow marriage, but consider that the widow should marry a widower and not a bachelor. A woman who has offended with a man of another caste, except the very low ones, may be re-admitted to caste intercourse by the ceremony of cutting off a lock of her hair and the infliction of a fine. 'The Bhoyar is an all-round cultivator,' Mr. Montgomerie remarks, 'and he thrives on 'the mixed holdings comprising both *rabi* and *kharīf* land. 'Both as a compendium of agriculture and as a man of in-'dustry he commands respect. There are high-lying fields 'in the Mohkher group whose black soil has been cleared 'of stones by the Bhoyar cultivator in as perfect a manner 'as disintegration, the mother of boulders, will permit. 'He is somewhat too much addicted to the bottle, but his 'standard of living is comfortable.'

Teli and Kalār.

56. The Telis number 13,000 persons and own about 40 villages. They are engaged in a variety of pursuits and form an important class of the community. Besides their special business of oil pressing, they act as general dealers and carriers, and convey produce and groceries to and from the markets. Many of them have taken to cultivation, but some still press oil from til and *jagnī* and from the fruit of the mahuā and *kāranj* (*Pongamia glabra*) trees, while the Yerandia Telis are so called because they extract it from the castor-oil plant. Girls are married at all ages, as a Teli will have the weddings of two or three daughters at the same time to save expense, and thus grown-up girls and children are married together. When a Teli girl is married, it is said that her parents give her a hen as a dowry and tell her to buy eggs and chickens and sell them at a profit, and to buy a goat and sell that, and then to buy a cow and get a calf from her and then to buy a buffalo

and so on, so that the hen which they give her should be as good as a fortune. The Kalārs (5000) own about 70 villages. They are chiefly found in the Aser pargana of the Chhindwāra tahsīl, where there is a plentiful supply of mahuā for the manufacture of liquor. With the control of the liquor supply in their hands, they also controlled the Gonds and have played a more important part in the past history of the District than their numbers would indicate. Many of the Kalārs become good landlords, but a few are harsh and exacting.[1]

Menial and labouring castes.

57. Of the despised and labouring classes, the principal castes are Mehrās, Chamārs and Katias. The Mehrās (32,000) form 8 per cent. of the population and are the third most numerous caste in the District. Many of them have abandoned their traditional occupation of hand-weaving and taken to agriculture; they are also village watchmen. At their marriages the Mehrās seat the bride and bridegroom in the frame of a loom during the ceremony. They also worship the hide of a cow or bullock filled with water. They drink together ceremoniously, a pot of liquor being placed on a folded cloth and all the guests sitting round it in a circle. An elder man then lays a new piece of cloth on the pot and worships it. He takes a cup of the liquor himself and hands round a cupful to every person present. The Mehrās, Dhīmars, Yerandia Telis and other low castes celebrate at intervals in conjunction the festival of Nārāyan Deo. At this ceremony, which must take place at night, distinctions of caste are abolished as in the worship at Jagannāth's temple. The party being assembled, a pig is killed by strangulation and cooked and eaten by all present. After this the guests worship a block of wood of the *kadamb* tree (*Anthrocephalus cadamba*) which represents the god Nārāyan, and they then proceed to the liquor shop and drink together from the same cup. With cock-crow the festival ends and distinctions of caste are

[1] Chhindwāra Settlement Report, p. 26.

resumed. The worship of Nārāyan Deo is performed once in three or four years. The Katias, as their name indicates, are cotton-spinners by trade, and are on the same level as the Mehrās. Their occupation being now gone, they have generally taken to agriculture. Of castes inclined to crime, the District Superintendent of Police mentions the Ojhā Gonds as indigenous to the District, and as being bold and expert thieves. They wander about the country, chiefly in the jāgirs as bards and musicians. The Kuchbandhias, Banjāṛās and Pāsis have also a bad reputation, while the Māngs, who were formerly addicted to thieving, now generally make an honest livelihood by manual labour or by acting as village musicians.

Gond.

58. The Gonds number 137,000 persons. The seven jāgīrs held by Rāj-Gond proprietors contain about 500 villages or a fourth of the total number in the District, though most of them are small and insignificant compared to the villages of the open country. Outside the jāgīrs about 100 villages are in the possession of Gond proprietors. The two main divisions of the tribe are the Rāj-Gonds or aristocracy, and the Dhur or 'dust' Gonds, the plebs. The Ojhās and Pardhāns are also classed as Gonds, but are looked down on by members of the tribe proper, with whom they are not permitted to eat or intermarry. The Pardhāns are minstrels and genealogists, and the Ojhās priests and soothsayers. On the night before her wedding a Gond girl goes and hides herself in some house in the village. The bridegroom's brother and other men then go and search for her, and when they find her, she runs back to her own house and clings to its central post, from which she is torn away and taken on a bullock to the bridegroom's house. At the marriage four persons hold up a blanket in which juār, lemons and eggs are placed and the bridal couple go round this seven times instead of round the *bhānwar* or sacred pole. They then go inside the house, where a chicken is torn

asunder and its blood sprinkled on their heads. A pig must also be killed and eaten at the wedding. If a Gond girl cannot get married or does not like the husband her parents have chosen for her, she fills a gourd with water at a tank, and, coming back, throws it over any man she has a fancy for. He must then take her to his house, and is out of caste until he gives a feast to the tribe; when this is done the marriage is considered to be complete. If a married woman does not like her husband, she sometimes simply goes to another man's house and lives there. No quarrel takes place, and if she gets tired of him, she may return to her first husband. The Gonds have also the Lamjhanā form of marriage or serving for a wife. If a girl becomes enceinte before marriage, she may be wedded to a spear, and afterwards given to anyone else as a widow, but when the child is once born, she cannot be married to anybody. When a death occurs the Gonds still sacrifice a bullock for a man and a heifer for a woman. They tie it up by the horns to a tree, so that its forelegs are off the ground, and in this position kill it outright with two blows of an axe. After this has been done they go to the place of the gods, and one among them, who is possessed, goes about calling on God and holding up his hands. After a short time a little white caterpillar or other insect appears on the hand, and this is considered to be the soul of the dead man which has been brought back. It then disappears again, and they say that the soul has been taken among the gods. So they return home and make a little toy seat in the house and place on it a stone smeared with vermilion to represent the soul.

Description of the Gonds by Mr. Tawney.

59. The following extracts are taken from an interesting paper on the Chhindwāra tribes drawn up by Mr. Tawney and published in the Provincial Census Report of 1881:—'The Gonds proper, as distinguished from 'the Rāj-Gonds, Bharias, Pardhān, Ojhā and Gond 'Ahīr varieties (who are not considered Gonds, though

'they are evidently of the same stock) are divided into 'two main sects, those who worship 6 gods and those 'who worship 7. These sects again are subdivided into 'numerous tribes or *gots*. All the *gots* of the 6-god worship'pers are *bhaiband*, and intermarriages are not permitted. 'If a 6-god worshipper wishes to marry, he must select his 'wife from the family of a 7-god worshipper, and *vice versa*, 'the worshippers of the same number of gods being *bhai'band* to each other and *māmu bhānja* to the worshipper 'of a different number. I have not come across any of the 5 'or 4-god worshippers as mentioned in Mr. Hislop's work 'though I have met with as many as 10 gods in some of the 'houses. I therefore conclude that the main division is 'into 6-god worshippers and 7-god worshippers. All the 'divisions of these sects may eat together, but may not, as I 'said above, intermarry. The Gonds proper call them'selves Koitur, as mentioned by Mr. Hislop ; and if you wish 'to call a Gond, unless you are polite, and say simply Bhoi '(implying that he is a mālguzār), you should say, *Hikki 'warā, Koitur*, or Come here, Gond. This term would not be 'used if speaking of a Pardhān, or Ojhā, as they have, by 'the occupations they have turned to, separated from the 'main body of the Gonds, and are not considered as 'forming part of the true Gond family. It is probable that 'the Gonds of Chhindwāra have always been confined to the 'hills, and that Mr. Hislop's derivation of the word from 'Koh, or hill, is correct. All the Gonds proper eat together, 'and they will also eat with Rāj-Pardhāns and Gond-Ahīrs. 'The Gonds of this District are by no means a despised race, 'and hold a great part of the land of the District ; almost 'all of the jāgīrdārs or semi-independent chiefs are Gonds ; 'and through the *khālsa* there are many mālguzārs who are 'Gonds. They are, as a rule, somewhat unthrifty, parti'cularly those in the higher positions, but this must be 'expected from an uneducated race, who still think that 'their dignity is best kept up by the display of large

'retinues, and by barbarically lavish entertainments. As a 'race they are still distinguished by their great liking for 'woodcraft, and for sacrificing and eating bullocks; and 'their contact with Hindus has not apparently had much 'effect on their customs in this respect. The matter is 'however not openly talked of, and many a good cow-'revering Hindu mālguzār gives his annual contribution to 'the village festivals, knowing that his money will be the 'death warrant of some juicy young bullock. Thus at first 'my informers were inclined to be reticent on this point; 'but when I came upon some recently broiled bullock 'bones in front of the representation of Bhīmsen, the 'murder was evidently out, and after that the information 'was freely given, a formal excuse being attempted to the 'effect that if the gods did not like cow's flesh, they should 'object, which they had never been known to do yet. 'Already, however, some of the Gonds, high in life, are 'beginning to give way to the prejudices of their Hindu 'counsellors, and sacrifice other animals than bullocks. 'The Sonpur jāgīrdār died last year, and his son was 'bound, equally by tradition and the customs of his tribe, 'to sacrifice a bullock to the memory of his father. His 'Brāhman advisers, however, persuaded him to sacrifice a 'kid and to carry the ashes of his father to the Ganges. 'The Harrai jāgīrdār at the time objected, and said that a 'bullock should certainly be sacrificed, but they have 'since had a solemn session and agreed that, as they have 'adopted the title of Thākur, they should give up cow-'killing. It remains to be seen, however, what they 'will do if they happen to be put out of caste. The 'Gorakhghāt jāgīrdār's son has just succeeded n blowing 'off half his own ear with his musket, and the caste-fellows 'demanded and ate 7 bullocks at the dinner. None of the 'Gonds of the District have yet, I believe, assumed the 'sacred thread, but some of them are evidently on the 'high way to it.'

60. 'The Pardhāns are divided into two classes—the 'Rāj-Pardhāns and Totyā Pardhāns. 'The Rāj-Pardhāns are the bards of 'the Gonds, and they can also officiate as priests, but 'the Bhumkā generally acts in the latter capacity, and 'the Pardhāns confine themselves to singing praises of 'the god. At every public worship in the *Deo-khallā*, 'there should, if possible, be a Pardhān, and great men 'use them on less important occasions. They cannot 'even worship their household gods or be married without 'them. The Rāj-Pardhāns are looked down on by the 'Gonds, and considered as somewhat inferior, seeing 'that they take the offerings at religious ceremonies 'and the clothes of the dear departed at funerals. This 'has never been the business of a true Gond, who 'seems never happier than when wandering in the jungle, 'and who above all things loves his axe, and next to that a 'tree to chop at. There is nothing in the ceremonies or 'religion of the Pardhāns to distinguish them from the 'Gonds.'

Pardhān.

61. 'The Ojhās in this District are of two classes—'one acts as musicians, dancers, and 'beggars, the other is engaged as 'fowlers. There is no difference between them, except 'as regards occupation; they both eat together and 'also intermarry. The Ojhā women do not dance; it 'is only the men who do so, and when thus engaged, 'they put on special attire, and wear anklets with bells. 'The Ojhās, like the Gonds, are divided into 6 or 7 'god *gots*, and those with the same number of gods can-'not intermarry. They worship at the same *Deo-khallā* 'as Gonds, but being regarded as an inferior caste, they 'are not allowed so near the sacred presence. Like the 'Gonds they incorporate the spirit of the deceased with the 'gods, but the manner of doing so is somewhat different, 'as they make an image of brass to represent the soul of

Ojhā.

'the deceased, and keep this with the household gods. If 'the family remains undivided, these relics naturally accu-'mulate, and opportunity is taken of the death of some 'grave and reverend senior to bury the majority of them 'with him. As with the Gonds, if a household god makes 'himself too objectionable, he is quietly buried, to keep him 'out of mischief, and a new god is introduced into the 'family. He should properly bear the same name as his 'degraded predecessor, but very often does not. The Ojhās 'are too poor to indulge in the luxury of burning their 'deceased friends, and therefore invariably bury them.'

Bharia.

62. 'The Bharias are the wildest of wild Gonds[1], and 'they are inveterate *dhyā* cutters. It 'is found almost impossible to break 'them of this habit, and if restrictions are placed on 'this sort of cultivation, they at once leave for some 'place where it is possible. They all speak Hindī, and 'profess not to know a word of Gondi, though always 'living among Gonds. Probably they are later occupants 'of the hills than the other Gonds, and have only been 'driven to them as a last resource, now that all the plain 'has been cleared and their occupation there has gone. As 'long as they were wanted to clear forest for the Hindus, they 'stopped with them and adopted their language; now they find 'themselves driven to the jāgīrs, where alone *dhyā* is allowed, 'and they come among the Gonds as foreigners, speaking a 'different tongue. The Bharias will eat and drink from the 'hand of a Gond, but not a Gond from the hand of a Bharia. 'They are divided into numerous *gots* like Gonds, some of 'the *gots* being *bhaiband* and others *māmu bhānja*, accord-'ing to the number of gods worshipped. They do not 'intermarry with Gonds, but if either take a wife from the 'other, the offence is atoned for by giving a dinner, and the 'offspring is legitimate, and belongs to the caste of the 'father. The gods are much the same as those of the

[1] The Bharias are not really Gonds, but a distinct tribe.

'Gonds, and are represented by iron in some shape. From 'their having been so much in contact with Hindus, however, Mahādeo and Durgā are more frequently worshipped. 'Their marriage ceremonies are the same as those of the 'Gonds, and Lamjhanā is practised; but the period of 'service is usually shorter, not extending over 3 years. 'After death a bullock is sacrificed to the manes of the 'deceased, and a *Thāpnā* is made with the same ceremonies as among the Gonds, and, like them, the Bharias 'are almost omnivorous'.

Remarks on the Gonds by Mr. Montgomerie.

63. The following interesting observations on the Gonds by Mr. Montgomerie may also be quoted [1] :—'The Gonds of the 'Chhindwāra District are a pleasant 'people, and leave kindly memories in 'those who have to do with them. Comparatively truthful, 'always ready for a laugh, familiar with the ways and 'fruits and animals of the forest, lazy cultivators on their 'own account, but good farm-servants under supervision, 'the broad-nosed Gonds are the fit inhabitants of the hilly 'and jungly tracts in which they are found. With a marigold tucked into his hair above his left ear, with an axe in 'his hand and with a grin on his face, the Gond turns out 'cheerfully to beat for game, and at the end of the day 'spends his beating pay in liquor for himself or sweetmeats 'for his children. He may in the previous year have been 'subsisting largely on jungle fruits and roots, because his 'harvest failed, but he does not dream of investing his 'modest beating pay in grain. The Gond has but little 'debt compared with other castes, for his credit is but slight, 'and he is content with inexpensive marriage ceremonies. 'But he is improvident. Many villages of the District were 'founded by Gonds, but the more energetic and business-'like Hindu in course of time ousts the Gond. Of the 'villages conferred on Gonds in proprietary right at the

[1] Chhindwāra Settlement Report, page 22.

'last settlement, many have passed into the hands of 'Hindus by sale and mortgage. The use of the bow and 'arrow is being forgotten owing to the restrictions placed 'by Government on hunting. The Gonds can still throw 'an axe fairly straight, but a running hare is a difficult 'mark and has a good chance of escaping. The hare, 'however, falls a victim to the fascination of fire. The 'Gond takes an earthen pot, knocks a large hole in the 'side of it and slings it on a pole with a counterbalancing 'stone at the other end. Then at night he slings the pole 'over one shoulder with the earthen pot in front containing 'fire and sallies out hare hunting. He is accompanied by a 'man who bears a bamboo. The hare, fascinated by the 'light, watches it stupidly until the bamboo descends, and 'the Gonds have hare for supper.'

Korkū.

64. The Korkūs are, as a rule, very poor, the jāgīrdār of Pachmarhī being the only landholder belonging to the tribe. If a Gond hut is made of wattle, with a daubing of earth, the Korkū hut is wattle undaubed. A poor Korkū manages to exist with even less clothing than does a poor Gond. A loin-cloth of the scantiest and a wisp of turban coiled on the top of the head, and leaving the centre of the skull uncovered form his complete costume. The following interesting description of the tribe by Mr. Tawney is taken from the Provincial Census Report[1] of 1881 :—'The 'number of Korkūs in the District is not large. They are 'to be found principally in the Pachmarhī and Bhardāgarh 'jāgīrs, but they never venture into the plains like the 'Gonds. They generally go by the name of 'Korkū' or ''The tribesmen', *koru* being their translation for a man, 'and the termination *ku* forming the plural, as *di*, that, '*diku*, those. They also go by the names of Bhumia and 'Mowāsi. The former name, however, is used only 'by evil-minded Hindus, who will not acknowledge

[1] Pp. 199-200.

'their Rājput descent, and consider and call them 'children of the soil. It is no business, however, of a 'Korkū in this District to admit that he is an aborigine; 'and, of course, claiming to be descended from Rājputs, 'he says he comes from Dhārānagar. As a rule they are 'probably a shade darker than the Gonds, and certainly many 'shades dirtier. In the wilder parts of Bhardāgarh I came 'upon some quite too awful Korkūs from whom an inter-'vening space of 50 yards was an insufficient protection. 'The fact is, water is scarce in many parts of that jāgīr, 'and the aboriginal nose is admittedly ill-developed. It is 'not therefore till after many anointings with bad oil and 'many weeks of profuse perspiration that public opinion 'forces them to a stream to wash. All the Korkūs of the 'District speak Hindī, and this is indeed a necessity for 'them, living as they do among Gonds who do not under-'stand a word of their language. All of them speak 'Korkū also; though it is the fashion now among people 'well off in the world, such as the jāgīrdār of Pachmarhī 'and his relatives, to profess an entire ignorance of the 'most elementary words in that language. The same 'yearning to pass as Hindus has also affected their customs 'and religious observances. Killing cows is as great an 'offence among them as among Hindus, and some of them 'will not touch the flesh of the bison or buffalo. The 'sacred cord of Hinduism has also been already adopted 'by some. Their religion is now so overlaid with Hinduism 'as to be scarcely distinguished from it, and the tendency 'is to become more and more Hindu. Thus their chief 'god in this District is Mahādeo, who is both worshipped 'in public, and has also taken his place as a regular house-'hold god. The reason of this probably is that for many 'years the chief of Pachmarhī and two other Korkū chiefs 'were the guardians of the cave of Mahādeo, where they 'used to take all the offerings, and thus made a nice little 'income. They used to take it in turns to perform the

'duties of high priest, and each year one of them had to 'perform the journey from his house to the cave on his 'hands and feet, marking every pace with the impress of 'his hands in *haldī*. The fair has now for many years been 'discontinued, and the custom has therefore ceased, but the 'chief worship of the Korkūs is still performed at the cave. 'The Korkūs have no separate place of public worship like 'the *Deo-khallā* of the Gonds. If they attend a public 'festival it is one of the Hindu ones. The household gods 'are called, as among the Gonds, chiefly by Hindu names, 'and are represented by iron, or wood, or brass images. 'The only peculiar worship is that of the sun and moon 'which are worshipped in Pūs. Sometimes a white stone 'is put up to represent the moon and a reddish one the sun. 'But this is not essential, and they may be worshipped 'without any image, simply turning towards the east in the 'morning and presenting an offering of a red and white 'fowl. Like Hindu artisans they also worship the tools of 'their trade, and being inveterate pot-hunters, the Korkūs 'worship their guns.'

SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS.

Marriage customs.

65. Among the Marāthā castes the bridegroom is called Nawar Deo or The new God and the bride Naorī, which means only a young girl. The bridegroom is considered to be a sort of king for the five days of his marriage, and everybody defers to him, and he is put in the highest place. At the marriage the bride and bridegroom are made to name each other for a joke, as they are ashamed to do this; the guests refuse to untie their clothes after the ceremony until they have called each other by their names. At a marriage the bride and bridegroom are always made to feed out of the same dish, and to put pieces of food in each others' mouths as a mark of affection. Until recently this was the only occasion in her life on which the wife ate with her husband, for always afterwards she must wait until he

had finished his meal before beginning her own. But this custom is now not so strictly observed. The Gaolīs and some other castes dress up the bridegroom in women's clothes when taking him to the wedding, and in most castes the bridegroom is made to carry some iron implement as a dagger or nutcracker, while on the bride's wrist a small iron bangle is placed for good luck. Among some of the low castes the custom called Binaikī prevails. On the day before the wedding procession starts, the bridegroom goes round to all the houses in his village, and his sister dances round him with her head bent, and all the people give him some small present. The Singaores are a local caste of Dhīmars, so called because they cultivate the *singāra* or water-nut. It is said that at their wedding a crocodile must be killed and eaten. The Sonjharās or gold-washers must also have a crocodile, but they keep it alive and worship it, and when the ceremony is concluded, let it go back again to the river. It is natural that castes whose avocations are connected with rivers and tanks should in a manner deify the most prominent or most ferocious animal contained in their waters. And the ceremonial eating of a sacred animal has been recorded among divers peoples all over the world.[1] Obscene songs are generally sung at marriages. At their betrothals the Gonds buy two rupees' worth of liquor and then sit round and eat off teak-leaves. When the bride goes to the bridegroom's house the women put little knots of wood on their fingers and beat them together while the men play on drums. Among the Mahesrī Baniās, when the bridegroom arrives at the door of the marriage shed, the bride's mother ties a scarf round his neck and then takes him by the nose and pulls him inside it. Sometimes they put a shoe on the ground and make the bridegroom kneel down and worship it in joke. Customs directed to making the bridegroom look ridiculous are not uncommon among Baniās, who appear to have a

[1] Frazer's Golden Bough.

sort of idea that he is going to do a foolish thing. A Mārwāri Baniā, who wishes to marry a second wife because his first is childless, must obtain her permission before he can do so. Among several Marāthā castes a *toran*, or string of mango leaves, is stretched over the door of the house before the wedding commences and left there afterwards for six months. A wooden triangle with wooden figures to represent sparrows perched on it may also be tied over the door; and among several castes the bride and bridegroom carry a tinsel triangle on their heads in addition to the marriage crown. This is called *bāsing*. The Tirole and Deshkar Kunbis, who consider themselves superior to the others, frequently do not allow their women to accompany the wedding procession. The Banjārās employ a Brāhman Joshi at their weddings, and at the time of the marriage the bride's party beat him in jest with a short stick. On the evening before the marriage it is said that the Koshtīs take the slab used for pounding spices, and tie a thread round it and make a Brāhman worship it, after which they throw the dirty dyeing water over him as he runs away. At the wedding an earthern pot tied round with grass is passed from hand to hand among the guests sitting in a circle, the bride and bridegroom following it.

Marriage customs continued.

66. The Hindus when invited to a wedding often go late, as they think that this shows their importance. Sometimes the host has to go and beg them to come two or three times, but even though he may be kept waiting for hours he dare not begin his dinner until they have all arrived, as in that case those who came late would go about saying 'Look, he asked us to his wedding and then gave us nothing to eat.' But the educated classes are now getting out of these execrably bad manners. If a Baniā is going to give a wedding feast he goes before the caste *panchāyat*, and they ask him how many people he is going to invite. He mentions the number, and they then tell him he must provide

so much *ghī*, flour, spices and other things, which they consider a sufficient quantity. He will say, 'Gentlemen, I am a poor man, make it a little less'; or he may say that he will use *gur* instead of refined sugar for some dishes. They will reply, 'No; your social position is too high for *gur*, you must have sugar all through.' The host wishes to invite as many guests as possible, as this increases his *izzat* or social consideration, but still not to spend more money on the entertainment than he can help; while the caste committee see to it that if he is to have the credit of having invited, say, five hundred guests, he shall expend an adequate sum on their entertainment. Among many of the lower castes the exact amount of hospitality which a man must show when celebrating a wedding is fixed, and if he cannot manage this at the time, he must make it up afterwards when he has the money. While if he does not conform to the public opinion of the caste in the matter, he is so despised that his life becomes unbearable. But if a man is known to be poor the caste-fellows will agree beforehand to accept a reduced scale of entertainment. If the bridegroom's party has to come on a journey, his father will sometimes stipulate with the bride's father for the payment of part of their expenses, and in default of this will refuse to come.

Widow-marriage.

67. The remarriage of widows is permitted among all castes except Brāhmans, some Rājputs, Baniās and Kāyasths. It is called *pāt* or *chūri pahrāna*. The widow, when brought to the new husband's house, enters it from behind after bathing and putting on new clothes. Among the Gaolis, Koshtīs, Lodhīs, and other castes, if a man has a young son and his eldest son dies, he will often marry his son's widow to the boy even though she may be over thirty and he only five or six, and will keep her in the house until the boy is grown up. This is done with a view of avoiding the expense of a regular marriage ceremony. It is said that at the time of the census, a rumour got about that the houses

were being numbered, so that all widows might be taken to Assam to provide wives for the coolies there who wanted them. Believing this, a Gaoli widow woman of fifty years old married her grandson of three months old and put on bangles. Among some castes, if a bachelor marries a widow because he cannot get an unmarried girl, he first goes through a symbolical ceremony with a tree. And similarly if he takes a second wife, he first performs the ceremony with a tree, which is considered as his second wife, and the woman then becomes the third, a second marriage being considered unlucky.

Customs at death.

68. Among the Marāthā Brāhmans, on the day of her husband's death a woman besmears her whole forehead with *kunkū* or red powder, as this is the last occasion on which she may wear it. At a Koshti funeral the mourners break a cocoanut at the burying-place and place a piece in the mouth of the corpse, the mourners then eating the rest, as a sort of symbolical last meal. Then they bathe and return to the house of the deceased, and the host puts a *lotā* on the ground, into which everyone drops one or two copper coins ; with the money he buys parched gram and *gur* or unrefined sugar, and they all proceed to a river or tank and eat this. On the third day the host feeds the caste committee and is purified. On the anniversary of Pitripaksh in Kunwār, they have a feast, to which they invite guests ; the host then stands in the doorway of the house with a pestle, and as each guest comes up, he bars his entrance and says, 'Are you one of my ancestors ; this feast is for my ancestors.' To which the guest will reply, 'Yes, I am your great-grandfather ; take away the pestle.' By this symbolism the resourceful Koshti is able to combine the difficult filial duty of feeding the spirits of his ancestors with the entertainment of his friends. It is said that after a man is dead, the Lingāyats dress the corpse in good clothes and sit round it taking their food. The corpse is then buried sitting, with the hands

folded over the breast and the *lingam* clasped in them. The head and shoulders are covered with salt, and if the man be rich the whole grave is filled up with it. At the funeral of a Sanyāsi or devotee, no mourning is observed, as he is supposed to have attained to the eternal felicity for which he was striving, and the event is regarded as a happy one. Therefore the people sing songs when following him to the grave.

Villages and houses.

69. A village usually stands on high ground and near water. In the Sausar tahsīl and the south of Chhindwāra, the villages are built in a cluster with an open space in the centre containing the post called Meghnāth. This is used for the performance of the swinging ceremony after the Holi festival. In the north the villages consist of a line of houses on either side of the central road, behind each house being the little garden by which much store is set. At the present day tiles are commonly used for roofing by well-to-do tenants, and it is only in remote and wild parts that thatch alone is to be seen. In Sausar the people like to have good houses and make a certain amount of display, and here houses may be seen having two stories, with verandahs on each and ornamental woodwork. The roofs are made of large teak beams laid closely together and over them a covering of bamboos. In Sausar large pits are dug for holding grain in gravel soil, sometimes outside the compound in the public land of the village. The pits may be large enough to hold 1000 maunds, and in these juār, kodon and linseed may be kept for ten years. Wheat will not last for more than two years. In Chhindwāra grain-pits are made in the compounds of the houses, and in Chaurai it is kept in small brick receptacles above ground, covered with leaves and plastered over with earth. Each house has often a small space called the *angan* in front of it, protected by a wall; the earth forming the surface of this is kept clean and smooth, and visitors sit here and talk. It is also used for threshing the garden-crops and drying tobacco, and members

of the household sleep in it in the hot weather. There is always a tendency to encroach a little on the common way when rebuilding the wall of the *angan*. The Gonds usually plant a *semar* or cotton-tree (*Bombax malabaricum*) in their yard, as they require the cotton for striking a light with flint and steel. Hindus have a plant of the sacred *tulsī* or basil. On one side of the yard is a shed in which the plough bullocks and milch cows and buffaloes are tied up so as to be under the owner's eye. Manure is collected in a corner of the *bāri* or garden behind the house, and the women also use this for bathing. The mālguzār's house is usually in the centre of the village, and those of the Chamārs, Mehrās, Gonds and other low castes are situated on the outskirts. Outside a Gond village may be seen a number of memorials to the dead, each consisting of four stones in a square with another in the centre half-buried in the ground. The grave is sometimes boarded up with posts in the corners like bedposts. Each village has usually two or three wells, usually shored up with cross beams of timber; or if the water-supply is obtained from a stream, water-holes are dug out in the bed of this. The openings of wells are generally protected with lattice-work, and they are cleaned out once a year by the villagers working together. A site is fixed for the burial-ground about half a mile from the village, and the burning ghāt may be near this, but it should be close to water, as all Hindus must bathe after a funeral, returning home afterwards in their wet clothes.

Names of villages.

70. A noticeable feature of the names of villages in Chhindwāra is that many of them are derived from the Gondī and Korkū languages, having been founded by these tribes. Instances of such names are :—Kohkā from the Gondī name for the *bhilawān* tree (*Semecarpus Anacardium*); Tekāpār from the teak tree; Markādhāna from the mango; Kamkāsur from *kamkā*, turmeric; Khallā, the place of the god's assembly among the Gonds; and Sidoli, the ancestral

burying-place of the Korkūs. Among other names, derivatives from *dongar*, a hill, are common, as Dongar, Dongaria, Dongargaon, Dongarpāni, Bānsdongrī, the hill of bamboos, Mordongrī, peacock-hill, and so on. A number of names also come from *jhiri*, a spring of water, as Kowājhiri, the crow's spring, Nāharjhiri, the tiger's spring, Jhirlinga, Mahādeo's spring, Jhiria, Jhirpāni and others. Chikhlī, Chikhlā and Chikhalmau are derived from *chīkhal*, mud. Other names are Uplī, a cowdung cake ; Sarkīkhāpa, the cotton-seed village ; Bhūtkherī, the village of the ghosts ; Sendurjanā from *sendur*, vermilion ; Gāikhurī, the cow's hoof ; and Kukdīkhāpa, the village of the fowls.

Amusements.

71. Wrestling competitions are held after the Polā festival. Well-to-do men, who have a taste for the sport, keep wrestling-grounds, and the people are divided into parties who frequent different grounds. A man who belongs to one of these may not go to another or there will be a fight. Sword-play and single-stick are also practised. Sword-play is called *patā*, and a long straight two-edged sword with a handle is used ; this is brandished and wielded by the player to show his dexterity. Others perform by waving a bamboo backwards and forwards, a cloth soaked in oil and set alight being tied to each end. This is called *banehtī*. Cocks and partridges and also *bulbuls* are kept and matched to fight for wagers. Muhammadan and other low-caste boys are fond of fishing with a hook. The Gonds hunt pigs with dogs and spears. They also hunt by carrying a torch through the forest at night, one man carrying it and holding a mat screen before him to hide himself, while another follows and knocks over the small animals which collect at the sight of the torch. Cattle races are held at Taigaon Khairī near Borgaon on the day after the Til-Sankrānt festival. Trotting bullocks are raced in pairs with a light *chhakrā* or cart across open country for a distance of about half a mile. The course is, as a rule,

a little up-hill, so that the cattle may be less likely to stumble. The drivers usually stand, and not infrequently a man may be thrown from the cart and break a limb. Bets are made on the result and the money must usually be deposited with a stakeholder before the race, as public opinion is not strong enough to compel the payment of bets as a point of honour.

Titles.

72. The headman of a Gond village is usually called Bhoi. Bhoyars and Mālis have the title of Mahājan for their prominent men, while leading Kunbīs are usually addressed as Patel, and Lodhīs as Badkur, the designation of the head of the *panchāyat* or caste committee. Among Banjaras and Dhīmars the headman is called Naik. Raghuvansīs and Chamārs have the title of Chaudharī, and Nais and Mehras that of Mehtar. Among other low castes the head of the *panchāyat* is known as Sethia.

LEADING FAMILIES.

The Jāgīrs.

73. Among the leading families of the District, the nine jāgīrdārs take the first place. They are all Rāj-Gonds, except the jāgīrdār of Pachmarhi, who is a Muāsi Korkū. The jāgīrs occupy the mountainous tracts in the north of the District, and the estates vary in size from 5 to 176 villages. Partābgarh-Pagāra and Harrai are the most important estates and are held by the same jāgīrdār. Batkāgarh, Sonpur, Bhardāgarh, Pachmarhī and Almod are all of considerable size, while Gorpāni and Gorakhghāt are small estates. Of the actual origin of the jāgīr tenures, little is known, but some of the chiefs possess records, from which it appears that the grants were made to them by the Gond Rājā of Deogarh as rewards for the suppression of rebellious chiefs or for settling the wild tracts they occupied and protecting them from aggression from without. Under the Marāthās the chiefs lived mainly by plundering and harassing the adjacent lowlands, and to wean them from

these habits and induce them to adopt the more peaceful livelihood of the cultivator, the British Resident, on taking over the administration of the Nāgpur kingdom, granted them allowances for their support, which have, in some cases, been continued to the present time. Considerable tracts in some of the jāgīrs are held free from the chief for the maintenance of other branches of the family. The Dhāla Gond family of the *khālsa* are related to the Deogarh Rājās. Shankar Shāh of Dhāla had seven villages, of which six have been alienated in payment of debts. The estate was held on a *mukāsa* grant.

Muhammadan families.

74. Next to the jāgīrdārs, two old Muhammadan families are most prominent. Khān Bahādur Ali Razā Khān is a Sheikh. His ancestor, Mīr Fateh Jang, is said to have come to Delhi from Persia about 300 years ago and to have settled in the Punjab. Fateh Jang's grandsons obtained high appointments under the Emperor Ahmad Shāh, and a descendant subsequently went to Hyderābād and was given an estate there. This, however, was afterwards confiscated, and Alī Razā Khān's father left Hyderābād and came to Nāgpur, where he was kindly treated by the Bhonsla Rājā, and received a grant of about twelve villages. He was subsequently made tahsīldār of Chhindwāra, where he died at the ripe age of 85, leaving Alī Razā Khān, a child of two years old, as his only son. This gentleman is now 65 years old and is an Honorary Magistrate. He owns five villages, takes much interest in public affairs, and has received the title of Khān Bahādur. Muhammad Akbar Khān, of Chhindwāra, is a Pathān. He also belongs to an ancient family which came from Kābul. His ancestor, Hātim Khān, held charge of Ahmadnagar fort under Aurangzeb, and a descendant of Hātim Khān's took military service under the Bhonslas. Muhammad Akbar Khān's grandfather was for some time Sūbah of Chhindwāra, to which place he came from Seonī, and was subse-

quently a Mānkari or courtier of the Marāthā Darbār. The family was given a political pension by the British Government, which was continued until the death of Akbar Khān's father in 1890. Several members of the family have served in the Indian Army. Muhammad Akbar Khān owns eight villages, some of which were acquired by his ancestors. He is an Honorary Magistrate and has been Secretary of the District Council. Another notable family is that of Mirzā Siddīq Alī Beg of Nīlkanthī. His ancestor Nathū Beg, a Mughal Muhammadan from Arcot in Madras Presidency, obtained a high appointment in the Marāthā army through the influence of a relative who, Sir Richard Jenkins says, not infrequently participated in the intimate councils of the Bhonslas. Nathū Beg was killed in an action in Chhattīsgarh, and when his son came of age, he was appointed a Jemadar in the Bhonsla army, and posted to Chhindwāra, where, on his retirement, he settled. His son, Adil Beg, succeeded him, and on the lapse of the Marāthā kingdom was made Risāldār of the Nāgpur Irregular Cavalry. He was a recipient of the Mutiny medal of 1857, and in 1877 was presented with a certificate in recognition of his services to the British Government. He was an Honorary Magistrate and died in 1900. Having no son, he adopted his nephew, Mirzā Siddīq Alī Beg, who is now an Honorary Magistrate and member of the District Council, and takes much interest in education. He owns two villages and a share of another.

Brāhman families.

75. One of the richest Brāhmans is Seth Rām Lāl of Mohgaon. He is a prominent money-lender, and on this account is commonly known as Bohrā. His estate amounts to about 26 villages, and he has also a ginning factory in Mohgaon and was in charge of the Chhindwāra treasury for twenty years. He is a Mārwāri or Pallīwāl Brāhman, and the family came from Jaisalmer. Seth Rām Lāl is of a charitable disposition and distributes *sadāvart* or a day's food free to anyone who

applies for it, in seven different places. Seth Nārāyan Dās, of Pāndhurnā, is another Pallīwāl Brāhman related to Seth Rām Lāl, and is also a rich moneylender, owning some ten villages and a ginning factory in Pāndhurnā. He is of a liberal disposition and subscribed Rs. 4,000 to the dispensary in that town. The former mālguzārs of Pāndhurnā were a Deshasth Marāthā Brāhman family, now represented by Venkat Rao. Pāndhurnā was taken from his family by the Bhonsla Rājā and given to Nārāyan Dās, some other property being granted in lieu of it. The Dāni family, of Lodhikherā, are also Deshasth Brāhmans. They are now split into two branches, owning between them nearly 20 villages. The property was mainly acquired by the grandfather of the present representative, who also built the stone terraces on the bank of the river at Lodhikherā. Mārtand Rao, of Mohgaon, is a Mālwī Brāhman, and his family owns some six villages. It is of some antiquity, and the property was conferred on one of its members by Appa Sāhib, while Mārtand Rao's father managed the Bhonsla estate in Chhindwāra.

Baniā families.

76. One of the most prominent Baniās is Seth Narsingh Dās of Mohgaon. He is a Mahesrī Baniā, related to Rājā Gokul Dās of Jubbulpore, and owns about 16 villages. The family came to the Central Provinces from Jaisalmer something more than a century ago and were commissariat agents to the Bhonsla army. One of them was made Mānkarī in the Nāgpur Darbār. Seth Tārāchand, of Mohgaon, is a step-brother of Narsingh Dās, having been adopted by the latter's father before his birth. The property was equally divided between them. Sawai Singhai Khemchand, of Chhindwāra, is a Parwār Baniā, who acquired this title by his performance of the *rath* or chariot festival of the Jains, on which he expended some Rs. 25,000. He holds shares in about ten villages, and is an Honorary Magistrate. Another Jain family is that of Seth Sukhlāl, whose elder brother

came from Jodhpur to supply provisions to the British Garrison. Seth Sukhlāl owns four villages and is an Honorary Magistrate.

Other families.

77. The leading Rājput mālguzār is Ganpat Singh, of Piplā, who owns five villages. His ancestors are said to have come from Kanauj, and they served in the Nāgpur army. He is an Honorary Magistrate and helped his tenants in the famine of 1899. Chaudharī Umed Singh, of Chhindwāra, is the representative of the principal Raghuvansī family. They say that their ancestors were elephant-dealers in Ajodhyā, from which place they came to Chhindwāra and presented an elephant to the Gond king Bakht Buland. In return for this they received the title of Chaudharī and the grant of Chhindwāra village which they still hold. The family is now much subdivided and in poor circumstances. Ganpat Rao Bhonsla, of Pindarai, is a relation of the Nāgpur Bhonsla Rājās. His grandmother is said to have been nurse to Raghujī III, and the family were given an estate, but they have now lost this and retain only a small pension. The mālguzārs of Berdī, Keshava Rao and Khande Rao, are Parbhūs and are related to the Chitnavis family of Nāgpur. Their ancestors were officers of horse, and in a battle against the Chānda Gond kings they captured a pennant and standard which are still preserved in the family. The proprietor of Ghogrī, Parasrām, is a Kalār, and owns 8 villages. The Bhonsla Rāj family of Nāgpur have considerable estates in Chhindwāra. Rājā Raghujī Rao owns about 60 villages, including the whole Ambāra pargana of Sausar tahsil, and Kunwar Lakshman Rao about 30 villages.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRICULTURE.

SOILS AND STATISTICS OF CULTIVATION.

78. Mr. Montgomerie describes the soils of the District as follows :—'The soils vary from 'a deep black of ten feet or more 'in depth to a thin red or yellow soil, only an inch 'or two deep. In the Chaurai plain a depth of 'ten feet is not uncommon, and in the plain north 'of Mohkher six or seven feet of black soil are to be 'met with, but taking the District as a whole, I do 'not think the average depth of good black soil exceeds 'four feet. Below the black soil is found a subsoil of the 'local rock semi-decomposed. In the trap formation this 'subsoil is usually *muram* and a clay subsoil is less com-'mon. On the crystalline and Gondwāna formations, the 'subsoil is usually sandy and tends to hold up water. At 'the other end of the scale are the hillsides and slopes on 'which the gradual decomposition of the rock forms from 'the trap a thin red soil, and from the crystalline rock a 'thin yellow soil, constantly liable to be swept away by the 'rush of rain or the sweep of wind. On more level ground 'come the brown soils which lie intermediate in the 'scale, and have some admixture of organic matter. A 'valley usually contains, in the centre black soil, on the 'slopes which lead to the hills brown soil, and on the actual 'hill slopes the thinnest soils aforementioned in places 'where the bare rock does not protrude.

Soils.

'Clayey black soil is locally called *kāli*, and loamy black 'soil is called *morand*. The thinnest soil is called *barrā* or '*bardī*, and the somewhat superior red or yellow soil, which 'tends to a brownish colour, is called *mutbarrā* or *khardī*. 'The sandy soil formed either of decomposed crystalline 'rock or in the neighbourhood of rivers of a sandy alluvium, 'is called by a variety of names meaning "sandy," of which

'the commonest are *sahrā* and *retāri*. But the sandy low-'lying soil, adjoining river beds which is enriched year by 'year by a deposit of silt, is called *kachhār* or *galotī*. The 'names of soils differ in the two tahsīls, because Hindī 'is the language of the northern, and Marāthī of the 'southern tahsil, and this difference was recognised in 'the soil-classing rules.' In the Chhindwāra tahsīl 25 per cent. of the cultivated area consists of good black soil as against only 16 per cent. in Sausar. In each tahsīl the moderate brown soil *morand* II occupies a fifth of the whole area, and the inferior soils, *sahrā* or *retāri*, *mutbarrā* or *khardī* and *barrā* or *bardī*, occupy 55 per cent. of the area in Chhindwāra tahsil against 63 per cent. in Sausar. It is, however, somewhat misleading to include first-class *khardī* among the inferior soils of the Sausar tahsīl, since, for the special purpose of growing cotton, it is of distinct value. In the District as a whole the best soils occupy rather less than a quarter of the cultivated area, the moderate soil, second-class *morand*, a fifth, and the inferior soils nearly three-fifths. Land was also classified according as it was capable of growing wheat, rice or only minor crops in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and wheat or autumn crops in the Sausar tahsīl, and the usual position classes were employed.

Character of cropping and distribution of crops.

79. Mr. Montgomerie describes the general distribution of the crops grown as follows :—'There 'are three distinct types of cultivation 'in the District :—I, Rabī ; II, Simple 'kharīf ; III, Complex kharīf ; and each 'of the three main divisions of the District makes one of the 'types specially its own. *Rabi* is the representative crop of 'the Chhindwāra tahsīl ; for the moist black soil of the 'plateau is well suited to wheat and gram. In the jāgīrs, 'rough cultivation, without manuring, of the thin soil, 'enables a crop of the grass-like millets, kodon and kutki, 'or of that "miniature sun-flower" the *jagnī* oilseed, to be 'sown, and nourished by the rains. This is the simple *kharīf*

'cultivation. In the Sausar tahsīl, below the ghāts, the 'light soil is ploughed, manured, weeded and harvested 'with hereditary skill, and yields in the autumn good crops 'of juār for food and of cotton for sale. This is the complex '*kharīf* cultivation.

'The three types may be roughly defined as "winter crops," '"rain crops" and "autumn crops," and in fact the people 'sometimes distinguish between them as *unhāri* (winter 'crops), *sihāri* (rain crops) and *kathāni* (autumn crops); but '*kathāni* is an indefinite word and is also applied to *rabi*.

'There is no sharp division between the three kinds of 'cultivation, and they are intermingled and blended with 'each other. The cultivator whose chief crop is wheat, 'frequently has some poor land under rain crops, and juār 'is sown in the kodon-kutkī country as well as in the cotton 'tract. There is dignified leisure in exclusive wheat 'cultivation, but the most profit is to be made from a 'holding comprising both *kharīf* and *rabi* crops, from 'having, in short, eggs in more than one basket and 'plovers' eggs as well as hens' eggs. Many holdings are, 'as a matter of fact, agriculturally compound, having both '*rabi* and *kharīf* land.

'In the northern tahsīl the *rabi* type in its purest form is 'found in the open level Chaurai group on the eastern 'border adjoining the Seonī District. The rest of the 'eastern half of the tahsīl, comprising the Amarwāra, 'Singorī, Samaswāra, Chānd, Mohkher and (for the most 'part) Chhindwāra groups, is all black soil country, but cut 'up to a greater or less extent by hills and slopes suited 'only for the poorer crops.

'Chhindwāra town roughly marks the point at which the 'western half of the tahsīl, which is chiefly covered with 'yellow soil, begins. Wheat cultivation, however, does not 'cease at this point; a wheat-bearing area with sandy black 'soil extends south-westwards into the Umreth group. 'The remainder of the Umreth group and the whole of the

'Aser group are given up to inferior rain crops. But the 'growth of wheat skirts the Pench river up towards its 'source ; the Dalkā group is the valley of the upper reaches 'of the Pench river and carries wheat cultivation well to the 'west of its general limit. The little Khursān group, north 'of the Dalkā group, is geographically a part of the jāgīrs 'and exemplifies that preponderance of rain crops which is 'common in the jāgīrs.

'In the Sausar tahsīl there are two transition groups, 'Khamārpāni on the east and Ambāra on the west. 'Khamārpāni adjoins the wheat-growing groups of the 'Chhindwāra tahsīl, and is similar in soil and elevation ; but 'the influence of the Sausar plains is shown in a proportion 'of juār infinitely larger than any which may be found in 'the Chhindwāra tahsīl ; cotton, however, is not attempted 'in the cool and moist Khamārpāni climate. The Ambāra 'group at the other end of the tahsīl, lies in the broken 'mass of hills which lead down from the yellow-soil Aser 'group to the plains ; its level is lower than the level of 'Khamārpāni ; with the same proportion of inferior *kharīf* 'as Khamārpāni, it has less wheat and more juār, and it has 'a modest allowance of cotton.

'Out on the plains, it is only the Pāndhurnā valley, 'running through the Chicholi and Pāndhurnā groups, 'which fosters any appreciable wheat growing. In the 'large Sausar group, the system of elaborate *kharīf* 'cultivation reaches its highest pitch, and nine-tenths of the 'crops are juār, cotton and tūr and their mixtures.'

Principal statistics of cultivation.

80. Of the District,[1] excluding the jāgīrs, 720 square miles or 24 per cent. were occupied by Government forest in 1905-06, 336 square miles or 11 per cent. were classed as not available for cultivation, and 432 square miles or 14 per cent. as culturable waste other than fallow. The occupied area was nearly a million acres

1 The areas taken in this paragraph are for the year 1905-06.

or 67 per cent. of the village area of the *khālsa*. The jāgīr estates cover an area of 1597 square miles or 34½ per cent. of that of the District. Of this, 235,000 acres or 23 per cent. of the total are occupied for cultivation, and 654 square miles or 41 per cent. are covered by forest. The occupied area in the whole District is thus more than 1,200,000 acres or 49 per cent. of the total. At settlement (1892-93) the occupied area was 60 per cent. of the total in the *khālsa*, and there has thus been an increase of 128,000 acres in 13 years. There still seems considerable scope for extension of cultivation, especially in the jāgīrs. The distinction made between culturable and unculturable land in the records is not, Mr. Montgomerie states, of much value. Almost any ground in which the bare rock is not actually exposed can bear poor rain crops for two years. The proportion of occupied area in the two tahsīls, excluding the jāgīrs, is now very much the same, but at the 30 years' settlement (1864-65), the Chhindwāra tahsīl was more backward, only 37 per cent. of the total being occupied as against 44 per cent. in Sausar. The increase of cultivation was thus much greater in the Chhindwāra tahsīl during the period of the 30 years' settlement. The Settlement Officer remarks :—' The backward plateau has caught up the longer ' cultivated plains. There was good enough reason. The ' uncultivated areas in the Sausar tahsīl—Khamārpāni and ' Ambāra—were more hilly than the uncultivated area of ' the *khālsa* portion of the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and offered ' few attractions to the growers of cotton and juār who ' held the plains from the foot of the hills to the Nāgpur ' border.'

Fallows.

81. In 1905-06 the area under new and old fallow was 185,000 acres or 19 per cent. of the occupied area in the *khālsa* and 97,000 acres or 41 per cent. of the occupied area in the jāgīrs. In 1901-02, immediately after the famine of 1900, the proportion of fallow in the whole District was 28 per cent.

as against 23½ per cent. in 1905-06. Long resting fallows are necessary for the shallow red soil of the jāgīrs, and the area left untilled here must always be large. Mr. Montgomerie's remarks are as follows on this subject :—

'The extent to which new fallow (fallow of not more 'than three years) and old fallow (fallow of over three 'years) are included in holdings depends upon the type of 'cultivation which is practised. In *rabi* cultivation, 'a resting fallow is rarely given, for relief to the soil is 'obtained by a change of cropping. Once in three or four 'years gram or juār and tūr are grown on land otherwise 'always under wheat. But some land usually remains 'unsown, because the cultivator has been unable, in a dry 'year, to sow all his land before it dried, or in a wet year to 'get the low-lying soil fit for sowing in time. In the simple '*kharīf* cultivation, resting fallows are part of the system. 'The poorer soils are worked for three years and then lie 'fallow for three years. This is the rule, but the rule has 'many exceptions in the term of working, and the term of 'fallow. In the complex type of *kharīf* cultivation, a resting 'fallow is never given if it can be avoided. Manuring, 'rotation, and careful preparation of the ground maintain 'its fertility. Since in every group cultivation runs in more 'than one type, no enormous difference in the amount of 'new fallow is to be expected, but the record reflects faith-'fully enough the general style of cultivation. In six 'groups of the Chhindwāra tahsil—Mohkher, Dalkā, Chau-'rai, Chānd, Samaswāra and Chhindwāra, which have 'much *rabi*—the percentage ranges from 6 to 8 per cent. of 'the gross area, while in the three poorest groups, Umreth, 'Khursān and Aser, homes of the simple *kharīf* cultivation, 'the percentage runs from 10 to 13. Similarly, in the 'Sausar tahsīl, the percentage is highest (9 per cent.) in the 'Khamārpāni tract, in which the proportion of complex '*kharīf* cultivation is smallest; in the Sausar group, which 'is almost exclusively devoted to cotton and juār, the

'percentage sinks so low as 4 per cent. It is, therefore, in 'the complex type of *kharīf* cultivation that the area under 'resting fallow remains the smallest; in the cotton-growing 'Sausar tahsīl, the proportion of new fallow is 6 per cent. 'against 8 per cent. in the Chhindwāra tahsil, whose re-'presentative crops are wheat and kodon and kutkī. The 'record of old fallow should show traces of the inclusion in 'holdings of land of over three years' fallow, to provide for 'rotations, but it does not, owing to imperfection in the 'record. Old fallow belonging to a holding is easily 'ascertained and mapped when the whole country is divided 'among tenants and fully cultivated, but in the country 'where kodon, kutkī and *jagnī* are sown on rotations of 'land, the case is different. When one rotation is complet-'ed and another patch of the thin light soil is taken up, 'three or four years obliterate the traces of cultivation 'on the deserted patch, and the very man who sowed it can 'hardly point out the outlines of the patch. Moreover, 'under the system of plough rents which obtains in such 'tracts, cultivation wanders freely on the poorest soil, and 'an old Gond with one plough may have at one time or 'another had the whole of some 60 acres under crop. As 'cultivators multiply, and room for wandering cultivation 'becomes less, he will, under protest, see the area 'open to his plough dwindle. It is human to grudge 'to strangers what we can no longer possess, and such an 'old Gond will, with a child-like sincerity, claim a hillside 'on which he ceased thirteen years ago to cultivate. The 'principle in dealing with such cases was that the tenant 'should, in the presence of the mālguzār, point out the 'boundaries of his holding, and, if necessary, set out little 'heaps of stones at the angles, but the practice was imper-'fect and time was short. A curious instance of the 'difficulty of making a correct record was found in the 'Mohkher group of the Chhindwāra tahsīl, where the 'tenants got the notion that their old fallow would be thrown

'into the village waste, and therefore misrepresented their 'old fallow as new fallow, undeterred by the information 'that new fallow would be assessed and old fallow would be 'exempt. In any case the amount of old fallow recorded 'in holdings is very constant, being 3 per cent. of the gross 'area in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and 4 per cent. in the 'Sausar tahsīl, where some area is reserved within holdings 'for grazing cattle.'

Double-cropping.

82. Only a very little land grows two crops. Low-lying corners of fields, which are specially retentive of moisture, are sown with a second crop. Kutkī and rice are commonly the first crops, followed by gram and wheat. In wet years gram follows juār and *jagnī* actually follows kutkī. If the rainfall is heavy and late, the area growing two crops reaches its maximum. This was the case in 1897-98 when the double cropped area was 16,000 acres. In 1899-1900 on the other hand, when the monsoon was a total failure, the area sank to 1500 acres.

Statistics of crops.

83. The total cropped area in the *khālsa* increased from 5 lakhs of acres at the 30 years' settlement to 7 lakhs at the last settlement (1892-93) and to more than 8 lakhs in 1905-06. Statistics for the jāgīrs were included for the first time in 1900-01, and in 1905-06 their cropped area was 139,000 acres, making a total for the District of 9½ lakhs of acres. Chhindwāra in this year had the eighth largest cropped area in the Central Provinces. An area of 660,000 acres or 70 per cent. of the total was occupied by autumn crops and 280,000 or 30 per cent. by spring crops. In recent years the proportion of the autumn crops has slightly increased. In 1905-06 wheat occupied 204,000 acres or 22 per cent. of the cropped area, juār 189,000 or 20 per cent., kodon and kutkī 130,000 or 14 per cent., cotton 124,000 or 13 per cent., *jagnī* 89,000 or 9 per cent. and gram 62,000 or 6½ per cent. The principal increases since the settlement have taken

place in cotton and juār, while the other crops show small variations.

CROPS.

Wheat.

84. Wheat (*Triticum sativum*) is the staple food-grain in the wheat-growing tracts on the east of the Chhindwāra tahsīl. *Kathia* wheat is the variety locally popular, and was until recently sown more than any other. The people prefer it, because it is easier to grind in the rains. It also contains a higher proportion of gluten and is more nutritious, besides being preferable for the baking of unleavened bread. But the development of the export trade in 1890 and the following years gave a great impulse to the growth of *pissī* wheat which the market demanded. In the Chaurai tract, *pissī* has almost ousted *kathia*, but where it is grown for the local demand and for sale to surrounding Districts as in Mohkher, *kathia* has held its own. Towards Umreth wheat is commonly sown mixed with gram as the soil is inferior. *Pissī* is said to suffer less than *kathia* from hail, and to have a slight advantage in resisting rust. The grain of *kathia* is looser in the ear and more easily beaten out by hail. The other varieties are only sown to a small extent as delicacies. The land is prepared for wheat with the *bakhar* or hoe-plough, the regular plough being only used when the land is overgrown with *kāns* or *kundā* grass. A careful cultivator will take the *bakhar* over his land 9 or 10 times in the course of the year, but the average number is 4 to 5. It is a common custom in the wheat-growing tracts to go over the field with the *bakhar* as soon as the crops have been cut and to disturb the soil to a small depth. One more harrowing is given in the hot weather and two or three during breaks in the rains, until the ground has been properly pulverised and all weeds eradicated. When the rains are heavy and incessant, it occasionally happens that the fields have to be left untouched until the conclusion of the monsoon, when they receive a hasty preparation

immediately before the seed is put in. Wheat is sown in October, the Dasahra festival being the traditional date for commencing sowing, and ripens at the end of February, the harvest lasting till the 15th April. Of the combinations of wheat with other crops, *birrā* or wheat and gram, and *rajgā* or wheat and linseed are the most common. Occasionally a wheat field is lightly manured and irrigated, but Mr. Montgomerie says that an irrigated wheat field is as rare as a correct statement of *siwai* income. Wheat has not to be watched except in forest villages, and black-buck are not sufficiently numerous to cause much damage in this District. Monkeys attack a wheat crop in the daytime, but not at night. Among birds, peacocks and parrots are the most annoying to the cultivator. The former never leaves the near neighbourhood of cover, but in the morning and evening flocks of parrots are on the wing all over the field. They are particularly noxious in juār and wheat, and may be seen biting off the ears of wheat in their flight and carrying them to the nearest big tree to eat. Termites or white ants, known locally as *ugrā*, do not injure wheat much in Chhindwāra. The surface weevil (*Tanymecus indicus*) is known locally as *sāwardihī*. It attacks the young shoots in November and December, and, feeding only at night, will go down a whole line of plants eating them. Fields bearing a heavy crop are occasionally attacked by field mice. The stored grain is eaten by a weevil called *sondhā*. About 80 lbs. of wheat are sown to an acre and the standard outturn is 600 lbs.

Juār.

85. Juār (*Sorghum vulgare*) is the second crop in importance, and is the staple food of the cultivators in the Sausar tahsil, as wheat and kodon and kutki are above the ghāts. Three varieties are commonly grown in the District, *ganer* or a heavy kind of grain, *Berāri*, a medium one, and *tikandī*, a light one. The last ripens a month before the others. *Ganer* is grown in good black soil, and *Berāri* in light

sandy land. The seed of *ganer* can be stored underground for years without being spoilt. Another variety known as *argar* is sown in high stony land, and is less eaten by birds, as the grains are deeply imbedded in the head. The land is prepared with the *bakhar* once or twice in the hot weather, and once or twice after the breaking of the rains to take out weeds, the seed bed being ready about the beginning of July. The seed is sown through the *tifan* or three-coultered drill and two *bakhars* follow behind the *tifan* to cover over the furrows, some cultivators also using a brush harrow. This form of sowing gives pretty parallel lines, and the interculture operations are therefore done more efficiently. Heavy showers after sowing interfere with germination and may necessitate re-sowing. Occasionally a flock of goats is penned for one night in the fields to stamp in the earth after juār has been sown, the price paid being 5 *kuros* (100 lbs.) of grain. A firm seed-bed is important for juār, because if the crop is sown on loose soil, there is considerable danger of 'lodging' by rain or wind. The field is hoed with the *daurā*, a miniature *bakhar*, with a shear 7 inches long, and is also hand-weeded. Juār is sown in rotation with cotton and sometimes with arhar. This and other pulses, as urad, mūng and *popat*, are often sown as a mixture with juār, a common method being to leave every ninth or twelfth row of the subsidiary crop. Occasionally a field is lightly manured, but manure is nearly always applied in the year in which cotton is grown. Pig do much damage to juār and the cultivators are often afraid to approach a boar to drive him out of the field. The crop is watched day and night for a month or six weeks; one man is employed for each *machān* and he watches the crop for four hours in the morning and three in the afternoon, and then after taking his food goes back at night and sleeps in the field. The *mundā* or platform for watching is required for every ten acres or sometimes a smaller area. *Kānhi* or smut is the most common disease

to which juār is liable. Some mālguzārs have adopted the practice of steeping the seed in a solution of sulphate of copper. Gond cultivators place it in the urine of cattle which they say is also efficacious as a preventative. In rainy or misty weather the plants are attacked by an insect called *narkia* which eats the leaves and prevents the heads from forming. Juār ripens in December and the harvest extends into January. About 8 lbs. of seed are sown to an acre and the standard outturn is 550 lbs. In fairly good land 800 lbs. is by no means an extraordinary crop

Cotton—Varieties and methods of cultivation.

86. Cotton (*Gossypium neglectum*) is now the fourth crop in importance and covered 124,000 acres in 1905-06 as against 54,000 at last settlement (1892-93). Practically the whole cotton area was formerly in the Sausar tahsil, but in recent years the cultivators above the ghāts have taken up the crop on account of the profits to be derived from it. In 1905-06 the area under the crop in the Chhindwāra tahsīl was 23,000 acres. The variety called *jarī* is almost universally sown. The lint of this is rough, weak and short, but nevertheless the people prefer it, because it is the most vigorous, prolific and hardy of all varieties. The land is prepared for cotton in the same way as for juār. The seed is sown immediately on the breaking of the rains, and occasionally in the dry on the chance that they will be favourable, as the loss of seed is of little or no consequence in the case of this crop. The seed is sown with the *bakhar*, a *sartī* or bamboo tube trailing behind one end of this and being held up by a woman. When the end of the field is reached, the *sartā* is displaced and put on the other side, so as to leave the space between the lines equivalent to one width of the *bakhar*. Three or four lines at the end of the field are left blank for the bullocks to turn in and are sown subsequently. The seeds are steeped in cowdung before being sown to prevent them from adhering together. Cotton was formerly grown with an admixture of arhar or

some other pulse in occasional lines, in the same manner as juār, but it is now considered more advantageous to grow it alone. When arhar is sown as a subsidiary crop, more care is needed in watching it, and the arhar has the effect of stunting the adjacent cotton plants. The usual proportion is two lines of arhar after eight lines of cotton in the interior and one or two lines of arhar after twelve of cotton in towns, where cultivation is more progressive. When the plants have put out four leaves, weeding is begun with the *daurā* or small hoe-plough which is drawn between the lines of the crop ; a pair of bullocks often drags two *daurās*, the animals walking between the next lines outside those through which the ploughs go. The *dhundā*, a slightly larger harrow than the *daurā*, is used for the second and subsequent weedings. Advantage accrues both to cotton or juār from a certain amount of thinning, and juār is often sown too thickly, so that the young plants may be pulled up to yield a supply of fodder. A good cultivator will go over his fields eight or ten times with the hoe plough; about one acre can be weeded in a day. Below the hills, cotton and juār are grown in rotation year after year on the same light soil, and manure is necessary if the outturn of the land is to be maintained. Cotton is now sometimes sown for two or three years in succession, and a dressing of manure is given every third or fourth year. Cotton picking begins in November and continues for several months until the plants dry up and become exhausted. Four or five pickings are necessary, of which the second and third usually give the most lint. Near towns the cotton has to be picked immediately the bolls burst for fear of thieves, and the work is thus rendered more expensive. The plants are subsequently grazed by cattle and the stalks and roots are then collected and used for fuel or occasionally for baskets and inside roofing. The cotton crop is attacked by monkeys who eat the bolls and also by sāmbhar deer. Occasionally the plants are damaged by frost.

Diseases and pests.

87. The following description of pests has been kindly furnished by the Director of Agriculture. The cotton aphis is a small insect of a glossy green colour, like the English green fly. The insects feed on the leaves and the growth of the plants is stunted. This insect is familiarly known and is called *moa*; multitudes of them, each no larger than a small seed, may be seen grouped on the leaves and stalk of the plant; they generally remain motionless with the beak buried in its tissues; from each there drops a liquid which, falling on the leaves below, produces a shiny gummy layer. The drain on the plants is very great and further rowth becomes difficult. The insect is preyed on by various enemies as the Lady-bird beetle and others. The only sound artificial remedy is spraying the plants. Another pest, *Sphenoptera gossypii* or the cotton stem borer, attacks the plants if cold weather and heavy dews occur at the time of flowering. The imago lays eggs on the bark of the stem, which hatch into a small white grub. This grub tunnels into the interior of the stem and feeds on the inner protoplasmic substance of the plant, going on boring until it turns into the pupa, when the plant is killed. The imago is a beetle of a copper metallic colour, and it appears to be this pest which is known locally as *telang*. Plants which turn yellow or wither in August or September usually contain this grub and they should be pulled up and burned. The red cotton bug (*Dysdercus cingulatus*) is distinguished by the people and is known as *mirchī kīra*. The perfectly developed insect is a vivid red with a black diamond mark on the wings and some white lines on the lower surface. This insect may be found on the cotton at all times and most abundantly when the bolls are forming in the ripening crop. It sucks out the juice and renders the seed light and the lint stained and bad. It does not do so much damage as the other pests and can be shaken off the plants into a basket and then drowned in a little kerosine oil in

water. The pink and spotted boll-worms are described by Mr. Lefroy as follows:—'In August we find the spotted boll-'worms eating the top shoots of the cotton or feeding in the 'flower buds. The moth that comes from these caterpillars 'lays on the first bolls and the attack begins. As the bolls 'develope, more moths hatch out and both boll-worms be-'come plentiful in the cotton. This goes on till the cotton 'ripens, when probably the caterpillars hibernate. The 'spotted boll-worms hide away in the ground and there 'become pupæ, while the pink boll-worms curl up in the 'seed of the cotton and make a cocoon there. In the next 'March the spotted boll-worm comes out, lays its eggs on 'brinjal or some other plant of the order *Malvaceæ*, or in 'the old cotton plants standing in the fields, and goes on 'breeding. When the rains break, the pink boll-worm moth 'comes out from its cocoon. The bolls first attacked should 'be pulled off and burnt. Seed should not be taken from 'infected plants, and the brinjal should not be grown near 'cotton fields.'

Seed and outturn.

88. From ten to twenty pounds of cotton seed are sown in an acre and the standard outturn is 270 lbs. of seed cotton, yielding 81 lbs of cleaned fibre. In good land, when cotton is sown alone, a crop of 400 lbs. is not seldom obtained. But the standard is quite properly fixed at a low estimate.

Kodon-kutkī.

89. The small millets, kodon and kutki, are now the third crop in importance, covering 130,000 acres or 14 per cent. of the cropped area in 1905-06. Of this total the jāgīrs contained nearly 55,000 acres. They can be grown even in land so hilly as to preclude the use of the plough, the surface being simply scratched open with a hoe or pick-axe. Both are sown as early and late crops, which are known as *bhadelī* and *katikai* according to the months, Bhādon and Kārtik, in which they are reaped. The same seed is used for both harvests. They are sown in rotation with *jagnī*, and this oilseed is sometimes

mixed with kodon in the belief that it removes the intoxicating effect produced by the new grain. Kodon is weeded, but not kutkī, which is so like grass that it cannot be distinguished from it. From 16 to 32 lbs. of seed go to an acre and the standard outturn is 400 lbs., yielding 220 lbs. of cleaned grain.

Gram and arhar.

90. Gram (*Cicer arietinum*) is a very popular crop on sandy soils. In the loose *sahrā* soil it sends down its tap-root and makes a comfortable living. The gram crop is sometimes very fine, but it is ravaged by the same caterpillar that attacks tūr, and in the river valleys is liable to damage from excessive cold. The small tops of the plants are picked off to make them spread, but this must not be done in cloudy weather. If labour cannot be obtained, a flock of goats are let through the field. When there is heavy dew a sheet is sometimes spread over a gram field at night and squeezed out in the morning, and the water thus obtained is used as a digestive. The seed sown for an acre of gram amounts to 64 lbs. and the standard outturn is 500 lbs. Arhar or tūr (*Cajanus indicus*) occupies 27,000 acres or about 3 per cent. of the cropped area. Tūr is sown alone to a small extent on sandy ground, such as that on the banks of the Kanhān river, but is generally a companion crop to juār and cotton. There are two varieties with white and yellow seeds. The white-seeded variety is sown alone on the Kanhān, and the grain is considered to be sweeter and fetches a higher price than the other. Both varieties have a yellow flower. The crop is sown at the beginning of July and ripens in January. The whole plant is cut off with a sickle close to the ground. The pods and leaves are called *kutar*, and are a very good food for cattle. The stalks are soaked and are then made into large baskets for holding chaff. They are also used for covering houses, but are said to be liable to the attacks of white-ants. The crop is some-

weather is very liable to be attacked by caterpillars The tenants go out and catch these in a basket, sweeping the branches with a cloth. About seven and a half pounds of seed go to an acre of the single crop. When mixed with cotton, one and a quarter pounds are sown to an acre. The standard outturn is 400 lbs., but in good land the return is stated to be as large as that of juār.

Other pulses.

91. Of the other pulses *moth* (*Phaseolus aconitifolius*) and *popat* (*Dolichos Lablab*) are sown in very inferior land. *Moth* is commonly mixed with juār; it has a spreading growth like a creeper and does not rise more than six inches from the ground. It is also sown in small strips of land that cannot be used for any other crop. As the soil is always inferior, the outturn is said to be only 100 lbs. an acre. Sometimes the crop is not cut at all and the young cattle are allowed to graze it off the ground. *Popat*, or country beans, are commonly grown as a food for cattle. *Popat* is sown mixed with juār and also on very sandy land along the banks of streams. Mūng (*Phaseolus mungo*) is also sown mixed with juār in the proportion of an eighth or sixteenth. It is a spreading plant not growing above two feet high and has a small whitish-yellow flower. In cloudy weather the flowers drop off and the plants are then pulled up and fed to cattle. *Barbatī* (*Vigna Catiang*) is another pulse grown with juār. It is sown in lines to cut up the field of juār into sections. It is a creeping plant and spreads over the ground or twines up the stalks of juār.

Oilseeds.

92. Linseed (*Linum usitatissimum*) is not much grown, the area under it being only 3000 acres. It is profitable when it succeeds, but is a veritable lottery. It is sometimes mixed with wheat in the proportion of one to five. A little powdered manure is mixed up with the seed in order that it may not be sown too thickly. Eight pounds of seed go to an acre and the standard outturn is 220 lbs. Til

(*Sesamum indicum*) covered 26,000 acres in 1905-06 as against only 8000 at settlement. It is grown a good deal in hilly land and often yields a handsome profit. Only two pounds of seed go to an acre and the standard outturn is 150 lbs. *Jagnī* (*Cuizotia oleifera*) is a companion crop to kodon and kutkī and covered nearly 90,000 acres in 1905-06. It forms a regular rotation crop to kodon and kutkī in poor land above the ghāts and in the jāgirs. When grown, as it often is, on hill sides, the flowering crop forms conspicuous patches of vivid yellow. This crop has become much more popular in recent years, the area devoted to it having doubled during the 30 years' settlement. It is sown in July after juār and ripens in November; about 4 lbs. of seed go to an acre and the standard outturn is 150 lbs. Four pounds of seed yield a pound of oil. The pounded seeds are also mixed with mahuā and eaten as food by the poor, the pungency of the *jagnī* correcting the sweetness of the mahuā. The oil is also rubbed on the hair and body and the oil-cake is given to cattle. The ashes of the stalks are used as a substitute for soap and are mixed with urad and condiments to make the *pāpars* or thin wafers used with curry. *Karar*, a thorny variety of safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius*), is sown on the borders of wheat fields. It has white seeds, somewhat resembling orange pips, from which an oil is extracted and used for fuel and lighting. The Telis mix it with *jagnī* oil and it is applied to the wounds of cattle to keep off flies. Only about 100 acres are sown with *karar*. Castor (*Ricinus communis*) is not usually grown as a separate crop but scattered plants are mixed with cotton or in sugarcane gardens. There are two varieties of the plant, one growing only to three feet and the other to about seven feet high. The large variety has a bigger seed, but otherwise no difference is to be noticed in the appearance of the plants. Small castor is sown alone on the bank of the Kanhān near Rāmākonā. About 1400 acres are sown with castor and it can be grown both as a

rain and a cold weather crop. At harvest the heads only are cut off. The seeds are not crushed in an oil-press, but are heated in water and then broken up in a pestle, and the oil is skimmed as it rises to the top. The oil is very thick and has a disagreeable smell; it is employed for lighting and oiling cart-wheels and for softening leather. A little castor oil is given to a child as soon as it is born. The oil-cake makes a good manure for sugarcane fields. A seer of oil costs 6 to 8 annas and five pounds of seed give about a pound of oil.

Rice.

93. Rice, red, white and black, is grown but to a small extent. The white is grown only on good land. The only patch of regular rice cultivation is at the extreme south-east of the Chhindwāra tahsil and north-east of the Sausar tahsil, where the same methods are adopted as in the neighbouring Seonī District. The fields are divided on the crystalline soil into little compartments and occasionally a tiny tank is constructed at the head of the plots. In the rest of the District rice is usually sown as a first crop on the low-lying parts of the best soils, followed by a second crop. It is also grown as a single rain-crop, but is not popular. About 10,000 acres are usually sown with rice. An acre takes 64 lbs. of seed and the standard outturn is 700 lbs. of uncleaned, yielding 420 lbs. of cleaned produce.

Sugarcane.

94. The area under sugarcane[1] fell from 6500 acres at the 30 years' settlement to 3500 at last settlement (1892—94) and 1500 in 1905-06. The *gur* of Chhindwāra is being ousted from the markets by the cheaper product brought by rail from Upper India. The cane is there irrigated from canals and tanks and can compete successfully with the well-irrigated crop of the Central Provinces even in the locality where it is produced. The iron roller-mills of Messrs. Mylne and

1 The description of the sugarcane crop is taken from the Appendices to Mr. Montgomerie's Report.

Thompson, which have been adopted in the neighbouring District of Betūl, had not been introduced into Chhindwāra when Mr. Montgomerie wrote, but these are not sufficiently advantageous to make any material difference to the prospects of the industry. The bulk of the sugarcane area is in the Chhindwāra tahsil. The variety usually grown is the *pachrang*, a handsome variegated cane of good height and thickness. The *kondā* and *dhond* varieties are little used; they are juicier than the *pachrang*, but more liable to be eaten by jackals. A thin hard cane called *mūngni* or *mūngi* is sometimes sown as a protective belt round *pachrang* in the same way that the thorny *karar* (safflower is sown on the edge of wheat fields as a protection against cattle. The standard outturn of cane is taken as 3500 lbs. per acre. From 3000 to 4000 canes are usually planted to an acre and each cane is cut into about three pieces before planting. Before sugarcane pressing begins, Ganesh must be worshipped, a little stone being erected and vermilion smeared over it and a cocoanut offered to it. When a man has fenced his sugarcane field, one of the labourers pretends to be a tiger and runs all round the fencing and others throw pieces of cane after him. This protects the field from the ravages of all tigers.

San-hemp and ambāri.

95. *San*-hemp (*Crotalaria juncea*) is now a popular minor crop. It is grown mainly in Palatwāda circle and the hemp is sold in Palatwāda market. Kunbis and Gonds are the chief cultivators, and many Hindu castes do not grow the crop. The area under it was 7000 acres in 1904-05 and 5000 in 1905-06. It is sown broadcast and afterwards the *bakhar* is dragged upside down over the land to press in the seeds. The crop germinates and grows very quickly and requires no weeding or manuring as it chokes the weeds itself, and in particular clears the ground of the *agia* plant which is dangerous to sugarcane and juār. Sometimes *san* is sown as a green-soiling crop before sugarcane. It has

a yellow flower and grows five or six feet high. The crop is sown at the beginning of the rains and cut in December with juār. It requires a fairly heavy rainfall. The stalks are cut off at the roots and tied into bundles and the heads are then cut off with an axe. They are steeped in water for about ten days before retting. The seed when cheap is fed to cattle mixed with tiurā. The dried stalks are very inflammable and are kept for kindling fires in the rains. According to the verbal statements of local cultivators about 30 lbs of seed go to an acre and the crop may yield 200 lbs. of fibre. The value of the seed from a crop on one acre may be Rs. 3 or 4. Another fibre, *ambāri* (*Hibiscus cannabinus*) is sown to a small extent mixed with cotton and juār, for the cultivator's private use. The leaves are eaten as a vegetable, and the fibre is used for the bedding of cots and for the tassels tied to the horns of bullocks. It is said not to be so strong as *san* *Ambāri* has a large yellow flower, variegated with red and white.

Tobacco.

96. Tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*) was grown on nearly 1500 acres in 1904-05. The seed is sown at the first break of the rains and the young plants are transplanted in August at a foot's distance apart. Tobacco is grown in what is known as *pāndhri* land, consisting of a sandy, whitish soil which has been specially fertilised as being the old site of a village or by the deposit of silt from a river. In such land neither manure or irrigation is necessary, but if sown in an ordinary field the crop must be irrigated. The plants are pruned and the stems broken off so that the first leaves may be large and of strong flavour. The leaves are plucked at the end of January, the fresh shoots being then allowed to seed. The leaves are left to dry in the sun for about a week and are then made up into bundles and wrapped round with grass and allowed to rot to a certain extent. They are then made into fresh bundles and sold. If rain falls, or there is a frost as the leaves are ready to be

picked, much of their strength is lost and the value of the crop greatly diminishes. They may also be attacked by a sort of blight, when white spots appear on them and subsequently form holes. One-half to two-thirds of the weight of the leaves is lost in drying. A rough estimate of the selling weight of the crop is 120 seers an acre, the value of which at present prices is Rs. 80. Chhindwāra tobacco sells at 3 lbs. to the rupee and that imported from Berār, which is stronger, at 2 lbs.

Condiments and vegetables.

97. The area under condiments and spices was nearly 1900 acres in 1904-05, of which nearly 1600 were cropped with chillies, the other condiments grown being garlic and onions. Of 550 acres under garden crops, 200 are occupied by potatoes. The climate of Chhindwāra is favourable to this vegetable and it is exported to Seonī and Bālāghāt. The crop is grown with manure and irrigation, being put in in September or October and ripening in December and January. It is stated locally that 6 maunds of potatoes are required to plant an acre of land and the crop is 60 maunds. Recently the price at harvest has been as low as Rs. 5 per *pallā* of 3 maunds, rising to Rs. 7 in the hot weather. The people say that no profits have been obtained in the last year or two owing to the low prices and the tendency of the potatoes to rot. Brinjals (*Solanum melongenum*) occupy about 150 acres. Brinjals are stuffed with spices and fried in *ghī* to be eaten, this dish being considered as a delicacy. Water-melons and cucumbers are grown on about 300 acres on the banks of the Kulbehrā and Ḳanhān. *Kumhrās* or pumpkins (*Benincasia cerifera*) are grown on the roofs of houses during the rains. They are eaten with *ghī* and sugar, and are in much request at weddings, as they make such a filling food. The seeds are dried in ashes and peeled and are then made into sweet cakes with gram, sugar and rice. Beans and maize are grown in the little garden plots behind houses,

Beans are eaten boiled or fried in oil and are also dried and either eaten or fed to cattle. The pods are also valued as cattle food and command a good price. Beans are principally grown in the Mohkher tract.

98. The following statement is a rough estimate of the outturn of a normal crop on the acreage cropped in 1905 according to the prices ruling in that year :—

Total value of crops.

Details of crop.	Area 1904-05.	Standard outturn per acre.	Gross produce.	Value rate per rupee 1905.	Gross value.	Value of crop on one acre.
	Thousands of acres.	lbs.	Thousands of lbs.	lbs.	Thousands of rupees.	
					Rs.	Rs.
Wheat ...	198	600	118,660	29	40,92	21
Juār ...	191	550	105,148	45	23,37	12
Rice ...	10	420 (a)	4,299	22	1,95	19
Kodon ...	139	220 (a)	30,529	35	8,72	6-4
Cotton ...	114	81 (a)	9,216	4	23,04	20
Gram ...	61	500	30,584	33	9,27	15
Jagnī ...	78	150	11,700	30	3,90	5
Tūr ...	27	400	10,850	22	4,93	18
Til ...	31	150	4,626	16	2,89	9-8
Linseed ...	3	220	559	19	29	11-8
Sugarcane ...	2	3,500	5,352	9	5,95	389
San-hemp ...	7	200	1,819	15	1,21	16-8
Tobacco ...	1	250	367	8	46	31
Other crops ...	81	250	20,279	48	4,22	5
Total ...	943(b)	...	353,986	...	1,31,13	...
Juār stalks ...	191	350 pūlas	66,913 pūlas	Rs. 20 per thousand	13,38	7
Cotton seed ...	114	189 lbs.	21,504 lbs.	54 lbs.	398	3-8
Total value ...	...	...	...	...	1,48,49	...

(a) Cleaned produce.

(b) Includes double cropped area.

The total value of the crops is therefore nearly 1½ crores of rupees. At the time of Mr. Montgomerie's settlement (1892-94), the value of the crops in the *khālsa* area was found to be a crore of rupees.[1] If the zamīndāri area were

[1] Settlement Report, para. 96.

omitted from the above statement, the outturn of the *khālsa* would come to a crore and 30 lakhs, or an increase of 30 per cent. on the valuation at settlement.

99 Manure. 'In no particular,' Mr. Montgomerie remarked, 'does the practice of agriculture 'differ below and above the ghāts 'more greatly than in the use of cowdung manure. 'In the Chhindwāra tahsīl, manure is used for sugarcane 'and for melon patches in the beds of rivers; occasional-'ly a wheat or juār field is lightly manured. Otherwise 'cowdung, when it is not left to lie desiccating on the sun-'baked ground, is made into fuel cakes or thrown out to 'enrich the garden which lies behind each house that faces 'the single long street of an ordinary village. In the 'Sausar tahsīl, manure is most highly prized. Wood is 'brought from a distance that the cowdung may not be 'required for fuel; the litter of the cattle-sheds is daily 'added to a manure heap; the collection of cattle droppings 'from the village waste and the jungle gives employment to 'the poor, who sell it at two cartloads for the rupee; and 'the deficiency of cowdung is met by hiring flocks of sheep 'and goats, kept by professional graziers, to be folded at 'night on the land which requires manuring. One rupee 'for five score of sheep for one night is a common rate of 'hire.' Since Mr. Montgomerie wrote, the practice of manuring wheat has somewhat increased in Chhindwāra tahsīl. A few cultivators pit their manure, spreading grass or the branches of trees at the bottom of the pit and throwing in the cowdung and all the sweepings of the house. At present cowdung manure fetches R. 1 to R. 1-8 a cartload in Sausar and goat manure Rs. 2 a cartload. Cultivators now buy the night-soil from municipal towns and remove it in their carts. The saturated earth from cattle stalls is removed and placed on the manure heap. Green-soiling with *san*-hemp is also occasionally practised. In the cotton tracts fields are manured once in three or four years.

IRRIGATION.

Irrigation.

100. The irrigated area exceeded 9000 acres only in 1896-97 and has fallen as low as 5000 acres. The District contains less than a dozen irrigation tanks and about 4000 wells. The bulk of these wells are returned as temporary ones. Mr. Montgomerie has the following remarks on irrigation :—

'The only crops which are irrigated in the District are 'vegetables, spices and sugarcane. One exception—a very 'small exception—to this rule is wheat, but an irrigated 'wheat field is as rare as a correct statement of *siwai* income. 'Fruit trees, also, are watered. It is natural that in the 'Chhindwāra tahsīl irrigation should have made little 'progress, for the cultivator who desired a larger outturn 'simply took up more land from the culturable waste. In 'the thickly populated tracts below the ghāts, irrigation 'might be expected to make progress; but the system of 'cultivation in which the cultivators of the Sausar tahsil 'are skilful, does not include irrigation, and the low country-'man who wishes for a larger outturn increases the care 'paid to the tilth of his existing fields, if he cannot get 'fresh land. Further, the amount of water tapped by a 'well is said to be less below the ghāts than it is above the 'ghāts. Such irrigation as exists is carried on from wells, 'or in rare cases from water-holes (*bharkās*) dug at the foot 'of a bank overhanging a stream. In either case the water 'is lifted in a circular leather bag (*mot*) attached by a rope 'running over a pulley to the yoke of a pair of oxen, which 'lift the water-bag as they pace down an inclined run, and 'return backwards up the slope when the water has been 'discharged. The discharging channel which receives the 'water commences just at the head of the inclined run and 'leads the water off to one side. The main rope runs on a 'pulley over a bar fixed about four feet above the top of the 'run; an auxiliary rope runs over a roller fixed at the begin-'ning of the discharging channel and is fastened to the mouth

'of a leather tube inserted at the bottom of the water-bag. 'When the bag is ascending, descending, or stationary in the 'water, the auxiliary rope holds up the mouth of the leather 'tube so that no water can escape from the bag; but when 'the bag is drawn right up to the pulley, the auxiliary rope at 'a lower level guides the mouth of the tube over the roller 'into the discharging channel and the water is free to rush 'out through the tube. Irrigation by a channel led from a 'dam on a stream or from a tank is so rare that it is not 'worth consideration. In no assessment group does the 'irrigated area amount to more than 2 per cent. of the total 'area. In the Chhindwāra ṭahsīl, the irrigated tract, 'starting at the west of the Samaswāra group, extends 'along the top of the ghāts through the Chānd and Mohkher 'groups; half-way along the top of the ghāts it trends to 'the north-west and covers the open yellow-soil villages on 'the west of the Chhindwāra group, and the east of the 'Umreth group. In the north-east of the tahsīl, round 'about Amarwāra Khās, there is a cluster of villages 'in which irrigation for sugarcane prevails. Below the ghāts, in the Sausar tahsīl, the best irrigated tract is the 'Pāndhurnā valley, which includes the small Chicholī group 'and the centre of the Pāndhurnā group and is, as regards 'soil, not unlike the irrigated tract above the ghāts. In 'the valley of the Jām river, also, there is a group of 'villages in which irrigation is practised. Small as is the 'irrigated area, it has actually decreased since the last 'settlement, except in the villages of the yellow-soil area 'west of Chhindwāra town. The decrease is due to the 'decay of sugarcane growing.'

CATTLE.

Breeds of cattle.

101. The Gaolao breed of cattle, the best in the Province, are reared in the Khamārpāni pargana to the south-east of the District. In the villages of Palāspāni, Pulpuldoh, Dudhgaon, Gumtarā, Pathrī and Singārdīp, considerable herds of

cattle are kept by Gaolis and Raghuvansis. The Khamārpāni cattle are white in colour and are large and handsome with shortish curved horns, prominently convex foreheads, short ears and large and soft eyes. They have full chests and fairly developed forearms. The tails are long, thin and tapering. They are well-built and specially adapted for fast work. Bulls are carefully selected for breeding and fed liberally until they are two or three years old. They are sometimes allowed to graze on the standing crops. The bullocks bred in Khamārpāni have shorter ears and horns and are said to be faster than those of Arvī. A young bullock is known as *gorā*. So much care is bestowed upon these animals that they are said to have been at times carried in a basket. At three years of age they are harnessed to a light *chhakrā* and driven in it for some time. They are castrated at 3½ years old when they have four front teeth. At five years of age they have six, and at six years eight front teeth, which is the full number. A good pair of trotting bullocks will go 50 miles in 11 hours harnessed to a light *chhakrā* of about 100 lbs. weight. The cattle are sold as yearlings to the cultivators, who go to the forests to buy them. Bulls for breeding cost about Rs. 150 apiece. One bull serves for 100 or 125 cows and is changed every third or fourth year to prevent interbreeding, which has a bad effect on the progeny. A cattle-breeding farm has been opened at Jaitpur by the Court of Wards for the production of cattle of the Gaolao breed. The calves are disposed of to the cultivators from time to time. Cattle are also bred on the Kanhān river. These are black and red in colour and are smaller than the Khamārpāni bullocks, and though well-built are not very fast. They have strong feet and are better suited for cultivation in the hilly tracts. A good many cattle are also brought from the Hoshangābād District and from Garhākotā in Saugor and are sold in the Chhindwāra market.

Prices and working life.

102. The price of an average pair of cattle is said to have risen from Rs. 30 at the settlement of 1863-64 to Rs. 50 in 1892-93. An ordinary pair now costs Rs. 80 and many cultivators in the Sausar tahsīl pay Rs. 150 to 200 for a pair of Khamārpāni bullocks. For the best trotting bullocks, and especially one that carries his tail over his horns, fancy prices of five and six hundred rupees are given. With careful usage ordinary cattle will give about ten or twelve years' work, but in the hills they are worn out more quickly and well-bullocks will last only four or five years unless they are stall-fed. In 1904-05 there were 160,000 bulls and bullocks in the District or a pair for about every 14 acres of land in cultivation. The numbers have substantially increased in recent years, the figure for 1896-97 being only 124,000. A plough of land in Sausar is about 15 acres and means the area cultivated by two bullocks. In Chhindwāra the plough is of four bullocks and denotes an area of 20 to 25 acres. The hire given for a pair of bullocks is called *būhi* and is paid in spring grain at the customary rate of a small *khandī* (320 lbs.) for each bullock for the working year from June to November for raising the spring crops. The rate of hire is high, being a third of the value of the cattle. For the autumn season up to the Polā festival only half rates are paid and for untrained oxen quarter rates.

Food and grazing.

103. The food given to oxen, Mr. Montgomerie[1] says, varies immensely, and the working life of the oxen varies with it. The poor man feeds his cattle on the village pasture, and when that becomes scanty, on such of the stalks and chaff from his fields as he has not been tempted to sell. The result is that the oxen are speedily worn out, that the cultivator refuses to buy good oxen, and that his

[1] This paragraph is taken from Mr. Montgomerie's Settlement Report.

land suffers from imperfect cultivation. The ordinary cultivator grazes his cattle on the village pasture while the grass lasts, and then feeds them with the stalks of juār (*karbī*), the chaff of kodon and kutkī, or the green fodder of gram and tiurā from his fields until the rains; for 1½ or 2 months at the beginning of the rains the oxen dislike *karbī* and get instead chaff (*bhūsa*) with grain or oil-cake. An approximate estimate of the requirements of four bullocks is :—

The chaff obtained from 16 acres. Grain, tiurā or gram, from two acres. Salt 30 seers, Rs. 3-8. Grass for the end of the cold weather 400 or 500 *pūlas*, R. 1.

The working life of bullocks varies practically according to the sufficiency of their food. Oxen not only tread out their master's crops, but are lent to neighbours for threshing, and at the threshing-floor they are only muzzled to prevent them overeating themselves. In threshing spring crops an ox eats at least 3 seers; and the threshing oxen are said, perhaps correctly, to eat one out of every ten *khandīs* that they thresh. As a rule cultivating bullocks only receive grain during the months of April, May and June. Juār fodder is given for eight months during the hot weather and rains in the Sausar tahsīl. On the plateau the chaff of spring crops is given. Cultivators who have a considerable number of head send them to Mandlā for grazing in the hot weather, and since favourable grazing rates for agriculturists have been introduced in Government forests, those of the District are much more frequented. But cultivating cattle are never sent away to a distance. Salt is given to cultivating cattle several times during the monsoon months if the cultivator can afford it, and to others three times a year on the Jiutī, Polā and Diwāli festivals. On these occasions some cultivators spread the salt on an ant-hill, allowing about a seer per head, and then drive the cattle to it to lick off as much as they can. Milch cows are given half a tolā of salt with their *rātab* or oil-cake every evening. A

she-buffalo is given about five tolās of salt wrapped up in a *palās* leaf four times a year.

Cows.

104. In the plains the cultivators do not milk their cows, but leave all the milk for the calves, as they think it weakens them to deprive them of it. On the plateau they are milked but give only from one to three seers at most. Cows bred by professional Gaolis give up to six seers. Cows are not fed with the leavings of food on account of their sacred character, and they are sometimes given bread, pulse and salt, as it was formerly the custom to feed the cow before the family took their food. In 1904-05 the number of cows was 132,000, giving 67 to each village or more than one to each household on an average.

Buffaloes, ponies and small stock.

105. Buffaloes are bred only to a small extent and are not used for cultivation. Cow-buffaloes are valued for their milk and for the manure which they afford, but the young males are neglected and often allowed to die. A good cow-buffalo costs from Rs. 50 to Rs. 80. In 1904-05 the District had 36,000 cow-buffaloes. Ponies are bred to a small extent and are used for pack-carriage and for riding on the plateau. A pack-pony costs Rs. 15 or 20 and a riding pony about Rs. 50. The District contains few sheep but a large number of goats. They are in brisk demand for manuring cotton fields in the Sausar tahsīl. During the manuring season, flocks are brought down to Sausar from Chhindwāra, and will be kept continually on the move from field to field for a month at a time. It is usual to hire flocks at the rate of one rupee a hundred head for one night; but sometimes the cultivators combine to buy a large flock, and often penning them on their fields in the hot weather, send them to Nāgpur in the beginning of the rains to be disposed of. Only he-goats and rams are eaten and not ewes, this custom having apparently originated in the necessity of preserving them

for breeding purposes. A sheep costs two or three and a goat two to five rupees. Good white blankets are made and sold at about five rupees apiece, the price being high, as white sheep are rare. In 1904-05 there were 7000 sheep and 72,000 goats in the District. The number of goats has doubled since 1898-99, and increased from 50,000 to 70,000 between 1903 and 1905.

106. Weekly cattle-markets are held at Chhindwāra, Berdi, Pāndhurnā, Rāmākonā, Pīpla, Ambāra and Taigaon. From 1000 to 2000 head are sold annually in the Chhindwāra and Berdī markets and between 250 and 600 in the others. No extensive dealings in cattle take place at any of the annual fairs. The Khamārpāni bullocks are not brought to market, but cultivators come up from the Nāgpur country and buy them from the breeders. The Kanhān river cattle are brought to market in September.

Cattle-markets.

107. The local names for the principal cattle diseases are *badī māta* for rinderpest, *khurı* for foot-and-mouth disease, *galghot* for hæmorrhagic septicæmia, *tilur* for tympanitis, *chadchadā* or *ektangia* for blackquarter and *sar* or *ghatsarap* for anthrax. The most unhealthy season is the beginning of the rains when the animals gorge themselves on the rank green grass. *Sar* or the lung form of anthrax generally appears at this time. A veterinary dispensary has been opened at Chhindwāra and treated 278 cases in a period of six months in 1905-06.

Diseases.

CHAPTER V.

LOANS, PRICES, WAGES, MANUFACTURES, TRADE AND COMMUNICATIONS.

LOANS.

Government Loans.

108. Advances under the Land Improvement Loans Act have not reached any considerable dimensions in Chhindwāra, as neither irrigation nor the embankment of fields are features of the local agriculture. Between 1891 and 1905 only about Rs. 25,000 were advanced altogether, of which Rs. 15,000 were given out in the famine of 1900. The bulk of this has been recovered with interest and only an insignificant amount remitted. Between the last settlement (1892-94) and 1904-05 a total of 17 *sanads* or certificates were granted for works of improvement. Of these, 14 were given for the embankment of fields. Transactions under the Agriculturists' Loans Act also have only been large in years of famine. Between 1891 and 1905 a sum of Rs. 1·83 lakhs was advanced in all, of which Rs. 87,000 were given out in the famine of 1900. The whole of this sum, except a small fraction, has also been recovered with interest.

Rates of interest on private loans.

109. The rates of interest on private loans are the same as those commonly prevailing in the Central Provinces. Tenant cultivators, who borrow small sums, must pay 18 or 24 per cent. per annum, but large landholders who take considerable loans on good security can get them for 6 per cent. or less. For loans of seed of the wheat and other spring crops the ordinary rate is 25 per cent., but it has declined in some localities to 12½. Seed-grain for the autumn crops is lent at 50 or 100 per cent., as the amount required is small and the grain cheap. Loans of grain for food, while the crops are on the ground, have to be repaid with 25 per cent. interest at harvest.

110. The most important moneylenders are Seth Rām Lāl Sheo Lāl, Mārwāri Brāhman, of Mohgaon; Seth Narsingh Dās, Mahesrī Baniā, of Mohgaon; Seth Nārāyan Dās, Pallīwāl Brāhman, of Pāndhurnā; Jagannāth Dwārka, Mahesrī Baniā, of Pīpla; Singhai Khemchand, Parwār Baniā, of Chhindwāra; and Gulābchand Bihāri Lāl and Sewārām, Mahesrī Baniās, of Sausar.

Moneylenders.

111. A comparison of the villages held by different castes at the 30 years' settlement and at present, excluding the jāgīrs, shows that Brāhmans are in about the same position, holding 240 villages out of a total of 1400 on both occasions. The villages held by Rājputs and Kunbīs are slightly fewer, and those held by Lodhīs and Raghuvansīs more numerous. Gonds now hold only about half their former estate of 200 villages, the remainder having been alienated to Kalārs and others. The extent to which the value of landed property increased during the 30 years' settlement is indicated by the statistics of transfers of some villages given by Mr. Montgomerie. In the Umreth group during the years 1866—1876 the prices obtained for villages or shares sold for cash came to a multiple of 13 times the land revenue. During the years 1876 to 1884, the corresponding multiple was 30, and between 1884 and 1893 the prices realised in transfers for cash amounted to 51 times the land revenue assessed on the land. In the Khamārpāni group cash prices realised for transfers between 1866 and 1880 came to 24 times the land revenue and between 1880 and 1893 to 62 times. As the land revenue remained constant, the value of landed property must have about trebled in this period of 30 years. Since the settlement transfers have been somewhat numerous. Between 1893 and 1905 a total of 81 whole villages and 840 shares were transferred. By taking the total number of annas represented by the shares and dividing them by 16, an equivalent of 176 whole villages is obtained. The number of villages transferred

Transfers of villages.

in a period of 12 years was thus 257 out of about 1400 villages in the District outside the jāgīrs, or between a sixth and a fifth. This is about three times as high a proportion of transfers as was usual during the 30 years' settlement. The multiple of the land revenue represented by the prices obtained in private sales was 37 in 1891-92, 14 in 1901-02, 22 in 1903-04, and 48 in 1904-05. These figures are a striking demonstration of the decline in the value of property produced by the famines as compared with the periods immediately before the last settlement. But in 1904-05 prices had nearly or quite recovered their former level. Out of a total of 921 transfers in this period, 63 were made by moneylenders, 857 by agriculturists and one by a member of the other classes, while 124 were made to moneylenders, 760 to agriculturists and 37 to others. The moneylending class therefore gained by only 61 transfers or quite a small proportion of the whole number.

[1] The proprietary class.

112. Mr. Montgomerie wrote of the proprietors :—

The mālguzārs are as a rule in fair condition. They live comfortably and have a standard of dignity up to which they must act in the matter of marriage expenses, but in most cases serious indebtedness is not common. Cultivation and the standard of living are intimately connected. When the standard of cultivation is high, both the expenses and profits are in proportion. A high level of profits raises the expenditure on marriages and other ceremonies. Thus it is in the towns and large villages where the soil is usually favourable for high cultivation and the population is crowded that the greatest and most long-standing indebtedness occurs ; in the villages less popular for advantages of soil and sociability the rate of indebtedness is considerably lower. Gond mālguzārs predominate in the Amarwāra, Khursān, Dalkā and Aser groups. The grant of proprie-

[1] This paragraph is taken from the Settlement Annexures of Mr. Montgomerie's Settlement.

tary right does not seem to have been of much benefit to them in keeping them out of debt. The frequency with which the various castes are found holding villages agrees well with the general history of these tracts. Gonds in spite of their losses are still the most numerous. Many of them are indebted, sometimes for small and sometimes for considerable sums, and in several cases shares have passed into the hands of creditors (Kalārs). Their management of villages is unskilful and they lack thrift. Next to these come the other long established tribe, the Gaolīs. One Gaolī owns several villages, but this is the exception and they mostly hold shares. Some of them are prosperous but several important families have been impoverished by excessive subdivision of their estates. Kalārs, who as traders among an unenterprising population of Gonds and Gaolis would absorb the spare earnings of the Gonds and be in a position to take up villages that come into the market, have acquired various shares both before and since the 30 years' settlement. Their presence has one advantage in that by improving their land they set a good example. They are prosperous. Muhammadan mālguzārs are much more numerous in Mohkher group than in any other part of the District. They are descendants of former officers of the Native State. With some honourable exceptions their relations to their tenants are not so satisfactory as those of most mālguzārs. They object to the acquisition of occupancy right, and by exchange of fields or by taking partnership with tenants produce a feeling of insecurity of tenure. In minor matters also, such as *nistār*, they are less in sympathy with the cultivators than are mālguzārs of their own castes. Muhammadans are in some cases heavily in debt. The Kāyasth mālguzārs are in good circumstances and they are said to extract most rent from their tenants. The Ambāra group of Sausar tahsil is remarkable as belonging chiefly to the Bhonsla family of Nāgpur. The tenure is the ordinary mālguzāri one, but

in a number of cases inferior proprietors were granted rights at settlement. In the Sausar tahsīl the number of shares in a village is rather large, in some cases three to a mahāl and in some four. Brāhmans hold the largest number of shares. Their estates, however, do not include the best villages and a few families hold many of the shares. Mārwāris of various castes hold numerous shares, of which many were acquired before the 30 years' settlement. Kunbis, representing the cultivating classes, hold most of the shares next to Brāhmans. Considering the number of Bhoyars who are tenants in this tahsīl, Bhoyars hold very few villages; a few families hold estates of several villages. On the whole the condition of the mālguzārs is good and they live comfortably. There are few wealthy men among them and some are heavily in debt, but they are usually solvent and free from serious embarrassment. The mālguzārs of Sausar tahsīl are better off than those of Chhindwāra.

113. The Lodhis and Kurmis are the chief cultivators in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, but the bulk of the inhabitants are Gonds, whose standard of living is fairly low. The general indebtedness at the time of Mr. Montgomerie's settlement was not heavy, but the prevalence of sugarcane-growing added a third to the two usual chief causes of debt—the purchase of oxen and the celebration of marriages. Sugarcane is only sure to pay in a term of years. In an unfavourable year a cultivator loses, and a second bad year may exhaust his resources and leave him unable either to continue planting or to repay borrowed capital. There are no manufactures of importance, and few persons live otherwise than by agriculture. In the Sausar tahsīl Kunbis and Bhoyars preponderate, but the abundance of Gonds in the poorer villages is as noticeable in the southern as in the northern tahsīl. Here again a distinction must be drawn

[1] Tenants.

[1] This paragraph is compiled from notices in the Settlement Annexures of Mr. Montgomerie's Settlement.

between the tracts mainly inhabited by Gonds and Hindus; the former are sparsely and the latter well and sometimes densely populated. The results of an inquiry made by Mr. Montgomerie in 22 villages of the Amarwāra group of Chhindwāra tahsīl were that only about a third of the tenants were appreciably in debt, and more than half of these owed less than Rs. 50. The level of debt among the Gond and Hindu tenants was about equal. The Gonds generally use inferior oxen, costing from ten to fifteen rupees a head. Such poor animals are liable to die off and must be replaced. Their marriages cost about Rs. 40, and it was therefore natural that there should be a considerable number of debts of less than Rs. 50 for oxen and marriages. The Gonds have to borrow for these purposes because they have little ready money, taking small trouble either to get or keep it. Similar inquiries made regarding 2000 tenants living in the representative cotton-juār area of the Mohgaon tract of the Sausar tahsīl showed that about half the tenants were indebted, and only a little over a quarter had debts exceeding Rs. 100. The customary purposes for which money is borrowed may be analysed as follows. On a fair-sized holding, about Rs. 25 will be wanted for careful weeding and as much more for manure. A pair of oxen would cost Rs. 50. The digging up of grass roots and stubs is an expensive process and an initial sum of Rs. 40 may commonly be expended on this. A middle class cultivator frequently states his annual cash field expenses at Rs. 50, regularly borrowed to be repaid at harvest time. Rebuilding a house commonly costs from Rs. 25 to Rs. 40. A third-class marriage costs at least Rs. 50 and a second-class one Rs. 100. With so many opportunities for borrowing the existence of a considerable number of debts varying from Rs. 25 to Rs. 100 is not surprising. The average rental of these tenants was Rs. 16 annually and a debt of Rs. 100 would therefore be equivalent to six years' rental. But in a tract where both expenses and outturn are

high and rent is consequently an item of small importance, six years' rental is not so formidable as it sounds. On the whole, Mr. Montgomerie found, the tenants of the District varied a great deal in circumstances. About an eighth of the class were in a prosperous condition and free from debt, while about a fourth were deeply in debt or in a very reduced condition, verging on that of a common farm-labourer. The remainder had to look to the money-lender for help in their occupation, but though always indebted were not seriously involved. At the time of the settlement the tenant class were therefore in a favourable position as compared with those of other Districts. Since 1893 the general amount of indebtedness has no doubt increased, but the famine of 1896-97 was not severe in Chhindwāra, and many cultivators made substantial profits on account of the high prices ruling, while that of 1900, owing to the great assistance given by Government, had probably no very serious effect on the position of the cultivators.

Material condition of the people.

114. The following note on the material condition of the people has been furnished by Mr. J. A. C. Skinner, Deputy Commissioner of the District:—

'The District is a prosperous and advancing one. Though 'affected by both the recent famines it showed great power 'of recuperation, and hardly a village has suffered more than 'temporary deterioration. Communications have, during the 'last few years, been much improved by the opening of import-'ant lines of road. A railway has for the first time entered 'the District; serious exploitation of its mineral resources has 'commenced, and is bringing further railway extensions. 'These developments have increased the demand for labour 'and are raising the customary wages and the labourer's 'standard of comfort. Another marked feature of recent 'years is the increased cultivation of cotton, which has now 'become the principal crop of the Sausar tahsil and is rapidly

'spreading above the ghāts. The high prices obtained 'for it have given cultivators large profits and greatly 'increased the values of proprietary and tenant rights in 'the Sausar tahsīl. Premia running into hundreds of 'rupees are commonly paid for ordinary tenant rights and 'an absolute occupancy field of 23 acres near Lodhikherā 'was recently valued at Rs. 10,000.

'The staple food of the people is in the jāgīrs, kodon-'kutkī, urad and *makkā*; in Chaurai and part of Amarwāra, 'wheat and gram; over the rest of the plateau and in the 'Sausar tahsīl, juār. The daily expenditure on food of 'labourers and the poorer tenants may be placed at 3 pice 'to 1 anna a day in the jāgīrs, 1 anna 6 pies to 2 annas 'in Chaurai, and 1 anna to 1 anna 6 pies in the rest of the 'District. Wheat being the staple in Chaurai makes the 'daily food there more expensive, though in other respects 'the expenditure in the Sausar cotton tracts is higher. 'Well-to-do cultivators throughout the District take *ghī*, 'milk and rice and their expenditure rises to 3 or 4 annas 'per diem for each adult male; females and children 'costing less according to their age and appetite. The 'annual expenditure on clothing of labourers and poor 'tenants may be placed at Rs. 6 to Rs. 7 a year in the 'jāgīrs, Rs. 9 on the plateau and Rs. 10 in Sausar, while 'well-to-do cultivators spend above this according to their 'taste and means. Similarly the cost of houses of the 'labouring class may be reckoned as Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 in the 'jāgīrs, Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 on the plateau (in villages) and 'Rs. 50 to Rs. 60 in towns, rising to Rs. 100 in Sausar, 'where wood and labour are more expensive. The houses 'of well-to-do cultivators cost as much as Rs. 300 to 'Rs. 700 or more. The furniture of labourers' houses 'costs some Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 only in the jāgīrs, Rs. 15 on the 'plateau and Rs. 25 in Sausar (where more brass utensils 'are used). That of a small mālguzār or well-to-do cul-'tivator will cost Rs. 50 to Rs. 70 and that of a big

'mālguzār Rs. 500 or more. A noticeable feature in the 'Sausar tahsīl is the high price commanded by trotting 'bullocks, used by the well-to-do in their *chhakrās* or light 'carts. Rents in towns have risen greatly and people who 'formerly would have paid R. 1 per mensem now pay as 'much as Rs. 3. Ten per cent. on salary is considered a 'reasonable rent by officials. For a clerk on Rs. 30 'per mensem therefore a rent of Rs. 3 p.m. would not be 'considered unusual. His expenditure on food would be 'about 3 annas a day and on clothing about Rs. 25 per 'annum per adult member of his family, whilst servants 'would cost him Rs. 3 a month, and his furniture would 'perhaps be worth about Rs. 30. Imported cloth, both 'Indian and European, is much used and the local weaving 'industry has almost entirely disappeared. Lamps, matches 'and kerosine oil are very generally used. The local 'cigarettes (*bīris*) are much smoked, imported cigarettes 'less, but the use of the latter is spreading. The use of tea 'is also spreading and I am informed that some 25 per cent. of 'the official class now drink it in the morning, and some in 'the evening too. The use of soda water is more restricted 'owing to the expense involved in opening a bottle. It is, 'however, freely used by the higher native officials and 'pleaders. About half the official class subscribe to a news-'paper, and knowledge of and interest in events outside the 'District and Province are increasing. The ginning presses 'in the Sausar tahsil belong to a few capitalists, and 'only a few men of large means or those whose estates 'have been under the Court of Wards hold Government 'paper. Acquaintance with European methods of invest-'ment, including life insurance, is, however, spreading, 'and some of the shares in the Pench Valley Coal Fields 'Company are held by natives of the District, whilst others 'have applied on their own account for coal and manganese 'concessions.'

PRICES.

115. Wheat is the staple food-grain in the open parts of the Chhindwāra plateau, and juār in Sausar, while the forest tribes subsist mainly on kodon and kutkī. Juār is taken as the staple food-grain of the District. The profits of cultivation in the Sausar tahsīl depend principally on the price of cotton. The average prices of these four staples in pounds to the rupee for the six periods from 1854 to 1894 are reproduced below from page 44 of Mr. Montgomerie's Settlement Report.

Prices of staple grains at periods of settlement.

		Kodon-kutkī.	Juār.	Seed-cotton.	Wheat.
I.	1854-1860	178	120	29	74
II.	1861-1866	116	42	18	35
III.	1867-1876	116	62	19	44
IV.	1877-1880	116	52	17	30
V.	1881-1885	116	66	18	49
VI.	1886-1894	34	49	18	31

The rates assumed at the settlement of 1892-94 were thus: kodon-kutkī 34 lbs., wheat 31 lbs., juār 49 lbs. and seed-cotton 18 lbs. These showed an increase of 62 per cent. in the case of cotton, 136 per cent. in that of wheat and 145 per cent. in that of juār over the rates prevailing before the 30 years' settlement, while the price of kodon-kutkī had apparently quadrupled. Taking an average of the normal prices ruling during the period of the 30 years' settlement, Mr. Montgomerie found the increase at the period of his settlement according to the rates quoted above to be: wheat 63 per cent.; juār 88 per cent.; and cotton 55 per cent. As against this large rise in prices the average rental enhancement imposed was only 12 per cent.

116. The price of juār taken at settlement was 49 lbs. per rupee, and since then it has been cheaper only in the year 1894 when it was 51 lbs. The highest rate recorded was 21 lbs. in 1897 and the average for the decade ending 1900 was

Prices in recent years.

35 lbs. Since then it has become cheaper, and sold at 48 lbs. to the rupee in 1905, the average rate for the years 1900-05 being 44 lbs. Wheat was 31 lbs. to the rupee at settlement, and during most of the decade ending 1900 was 25 lbs., rising to 17 lbs. in the famine years. Its price has since gone down and the average for the years 1903-05 was 31 lbs. Kodon-kutki sold at 34 lbs. to the rupee at settlement and ranged between 25 and 33 lbs. in the period from 1892 to 1902. Its price then fell greatly to 40 lbs. in 1904 and 32 lbs. in 1905. Since 1890 the average price of ginned cotton has been about 5 lbs. to the rupee. Good seed-cotton sold in 1905 at Rs. 60 to 70 per *khandī* of 320 seers or from 11 to 9 lbs. per rupee. Cotton-seed sells at about 50 lbs. to the rupee and that ginned by hand for use as seed-grain at 32 lbs. The price of rice was about 20 lbs. to the rupee from 1890 to 1903 and it fell to 26 lbs. in 1904 and 23 lbs. in 1905. Rice is a luxury in Chhindwāra and has to be imported, and its price is therefore always higher than that of the grains grown in the District. The price of gram has fluctuated considerably from 37 lbs. in 1891 and 47 in 1894 to 17 lbs. in the famine years. In 1903-04 the rate was 40 lbs. and in 1905, 36 lbs. Gram is thus more expensive than juār, but substantially cheaper than wheat.

Prices of miscellaneous articles.

117. Salt ranged between 10 and 15 lbs. during the years 1861-1874. Between 1874 and 1900 it varied between 16 and 19 lbs. The rate has fallen substantially on the reductions of the duty and was 20 lbs. in 1904 and 23 lbs. in 1905. Sea-salt obtained from Bombay is generally consumed. The Chhindwāra *gur* or unrefined sugar is generally preferred to that imported from Northern India and Hyderābād, and sells at about 9 lbs. to the rupee as against a rate of 11 to 13 lbs. for the imported article. Even with this difference in rates however the cultivation of sugarcane is no longer profitable. Sugar

produced in Northern India is known as Mirzāpurī and that imported from abroad as Sakharia. The former sells at 5 to 6 lbs. and the latter at about 9 lbs. to the rupee. Foreign sugar practically holds the market at present on account of its cheaper rate. The price of *ghī* has risen in recent years from 3 or 4 to 2 lbs. per rupee and in the hot weather months it goes as high as 1½ lbs. Milk is at present 8 seers to the rupee as against 16 seers a few years ago. Firewood is sold only in towns and the rate is about Rs. 2-4 a cart-load of 10 or 11 maunds. In villages the tenants bring firewood from the Government forests themselves, the expenditure consisting of 4 annas for the license fee, 6 annas for labour and one rupee for the hire of the cart or about R. 1-10 in all. A headload of about 50 lbs. costs 3 to 4 annas. Grass sells at the rate of 400 small bundles to the rupee, or R. 1-8 a cart-load. For *karbī* or juār fodder the rate is Rs. 20 a thousand women's bundles, a man's bundle being half as large again as a woman's. Manure is from one to two rupees a cart-load. The hide of a bullock fetches four or five and that of a buffalo ten or eleven rupees.

WAGES.

Farm-servants.

118. Farm-servants are of two kinds, known as *harwāha* and *barsālia*. In the Chhindwāra tahsīl the *barsālia* is engaged on contract and does field, household and other miscellaneous work, whereas a *harwāha* will only do field work. The farm-servant is engaged on an annual agreement from the 1st of Chait (March-April), the rate in 1905 being Rs. 60 to 80 a year. A proportion of this and sometimes the whole is paid in advance. In his agreement it is stipulated that if he absents himself from work he will be liable for the expenditure incurred by his master in replacing him. In Chhindwāra the farm-servant receives a fifth of the produce after the dues to the village servants and harvesting charges are deducted. Any advances made

for food are deducted with interest at 25 per cent. If paid by contract wages in grain the farm-servant is said now to receive from 6 to 9 small *khandis*[1] or 1900 to 2800 lbs. as against 5 *khandis* or 1600 lbs. previously paid. In some villages the old rate of 5 *khandis* still prevails, especially where there are Kunbī mālguzārs who supported their cultivators during the famines. He also receives a *haq* or present of 2 rupees in lieu of a blanket and at the juār harvest a *dalā* or basket of juār pods containing about 40 lbs. daily for two or three days. His wife is also bound to serve at this time for ordinary daily wages. On the Polā day the farm-servant's wife comes and grinds some juār in the master's house and receives a present of two to four pounds of grain. In Sausar tahsīl the rate in 1903 was 5 to 6 small *khandis* (1600 to 1920 lbs.) of juār or Rs. 40 to 50 a year. But it has since increased by about 50 per cent. to Rs. 60 to 80. Kunbis, Telis, Gonds and Mālis are usually employed as farm-servants, Kunbis and Telis making the best ones. Gonds do not work hard unless carefully watched, and hence are not paid so highly as the others. A farm-servant is required for every pair of cattle in excess of the first one, and when there are several, a headman called *awāri* is appointed and gets a little more. Mālguzārs keep a *kāmdār* who can read and write in charge of all their farm-servants, and pay him from seven to ten rupees a month.

Graziers.

119. A cultivator usually employs a private *charwāha* or grazier if he has buffaloes as well as cows. If he has only a few cows he sends them to the village grazier. A boy of twelve years old can graze ten head of cattle and is paid three to four rupees a month. Cultivating cattle are not entrusted to the village grazier, and are tended by one of the cultivator's family unless a private grazier is employed. When the village grazier is hired he receives one to two

[1] The small *khandī*=4 maunds or 320 lbs.

annas for a cow and two to four annas for a buffalo per month, and double those rates if he milks them. At the present time people will graze cows and buffaloes free in return for being allowed to take their manure and will even pay the license fees for entering them into Government forest. The annual grazing fees in Government forest are now one anna for a bullock and four annas for a buffalo with a cow free for every four acres in a cultivator's holding. But if more animals than this number are grazed, the fees are raised to 5 annas for a cow and 8 annas for a buffalo.

Daily labourers.

120. A daily labourer is called *mazdūr* or *rozandār.* Up to 1905 the regular rate for weeding the crops was 3 to 4 pice a day for women for the *banihāri din* or from 10 A.M. to an hour before sunset. Men are not usually employed for weeding, as they have to be paid higher wages and do no more work. In 1905, owing to the absence of a break in the rains, the time for weeding was cut short and the rate went in some cases as high as four annas. In Chhindwāra tahsīl the rate was 5 or 6 pice a day in that year. For the juār harvest men are employed to cut the stalks and then women break off the heads and collect them in *harās* or large baskets which the men carry to the threshing-floor. Each woman receives 4 to 6 lbs. of juār and each man 8 lbs. or more in Sausar, but in the Chhindwāra tahsīl the rate is said to be 4 lbs. whether for a man or woman. For harvesting other grains the usual rate is 4 lbs. Cotton-picking was formerly paid for at the rate of an anna per maund of 16 seers or 32 lbs. of seed-cotton, but it is said that this rate has now doubled or quadrupled. If the cotton is wet, double wages have to be paid. The ordinary wages for a casual labourer are 3 annas a day for a man and 2 annas for a woman. In Chhindwāra town 4 annas have to be paid now and labour is obtained with difficulty even at this rate. At

the beginning of 1906 the Deputy Commissioner wrote :—'Communications have during the last few years been much 'improved by the opening of important lines of road. A 'railway has for the first time entered the District ; serious 'exploitation of its mineral resources has commenced and 'is bringing further railway extensions. These develop-'ments have increased the demand for labour and are 'raising the customary wages and the labourer's standard of 'comfort. So far, however, local labourers are somewhat 'shy of underground work, and many of the miners 'employed have been brought in from other localities.'

Village servants.

121. The village servants are paid by the small *kuro* of 16 lbs. The Lohār or blacksmith and Barhai or carpenter each gets four *kuros* per plough of four bullocks or 20 to 25 acres annually and one *kuro* extra for mending carts, or 80 lbs. in all. The Nai or barber is paid 4 *kuros* or 64 lbs. annually, and in return for this he shaves the cultivator with the males of his family and his farm-servants about once a fortnight. The Dhobi receives 4 *kuros* or 64 lbs. of grain per plough and washes all the clothes of the family on holidays and occasionally oftener. Well-to-do cultivators and mālguzārs pay the barber and washerman more and utilise their services more frequently. The village servants also get a sheaf of grain at harvest and a sowing basket full at seed-time, making up about 8 lbs. of grain extra. These occasions are called *dhūli pherī* and *khet khaliyāni*. 'These customary dues,' Mr. Montgomerie says, 'will in time give place to payment for each job done. This has already happened in the case of the village barber 'who used to receive two *kuros* from every bearded man, 'but now gets this due only from a few old tenants and by 'the rest is paid half an anna for each shave.' The Gārpagāri or hail-averter receives one *kuro* or 16 lbs. of grain annually per plough besides these presents and on Basant Panchamī or the spring festival he also collects two

pice from each tenant for arranging to keep off the hail-storms which are liable to occur at that time. The Chamār receives 16 lbs. of grain for each *nāri* or thong for the bullocks which he supplies, and he is paid 15 lbs. of *gur* or about two rupees annually for the repairs of the *mot* or leather well-bucket. A new *mot* is now said to cost Rs. 15 or 20 as against only about seven rupees some years ago. It lasts only for one or occasionally two years and the mouth requires repairs after six months. The hides of cattle are now generally the property of the owner, but the Hindu cultivators say that they make them over to the Chamār without taking anything in return. As a matter of fact, however, they do get their *mot* or bucket at a cheaper rate. It is considered a disgraceful act to sell hides, and rich men give the Chamār a present of 2 lbs. of grain for removing the bodies of their dead animals. The Bhumkā or priest of the village gods gets a *kuro* or 16 lbs. per plough besides the presents at harvest and seed-time. He is a Gond, Korkū or Dhīmar. It is not part of the Bhumkā's duties to wait on Government officers, but a Dhīmar or Gaolī is made to do this and receives a small present from the mālguzār.

MANUFACTURES.

122. Tasar silk is produced and woven locally to a small extent, the cocoons being grown by Dhīmars in Government and mālguzāri forests. The cotton industry showed a decline of 33 per cent. between 1891 and 1901. Coarse thread is still spun for rough cloth and carpets and the Gadarias spin stout thread to make sacks for holding wheat and for *newār* tape. The best cotton cloth is produced in Chānd, and Mohgaon, Pāndhurnā and Lodhikherā are other centres. The Koshtās use mill-spun thread only and sometimes dye it themselves. They manufacture *sendrīs* or bordered *sāris* in different colours, *bānds* or *sāris* with woof and warp of different colours, *silyāri* cloths with

Weaving.

a black warp and red woof, and other articles. Mehrās make the coarse cloths worn by cultivators and *patūs* or plain white *sārīs* with red borders. In Norhia Sailā and Karwāl near Chhindwāra *pagrīs* or head-cloths are woven of very fine thread. Some Banjārās weave matting and gunny-bags from *san*-hemp and ropes and nets from the *ambāri* fibre. Matting is also woven from aloe fibre and ropes are made from *kamī* or *boyā* grass (*Saccharum ciliare*) by all castes and used for household purposes. Blankets are woven by Gādris or shepherds in different colours, black, red and white in patterns. The wool is coloured with imported dyes and lac. The white blankets, which are of good quality, cost from four to six rupees each.

Metals and woodwork.

123. Ornaments of gold and silver are nearly always made by moulding, little, if any, casting being done by the local Sonārs. Ready-made ornaments of silver which are exposed for sale in the weekly markets nearly always contain a large proportion of alloy. Some kinds, as amulets and head ornaments, are hollow and are filled with lac inside. The *māthi*, a solid ring with spiral lines worn by Bhoyar and Māli women on the right wrist, and the *dorā*, a flat bangle with a hook at one end and a loop at the other, are ornaments characteristic of the District. Gilt ornaments are imported from Benāres and sold by Muhammadans and others. Brass-work is done in Lodhīkherā, Chhindwāra and other villages. A considerable industry formerly existed at Lodhīkherā, but it has now greatly declined. Ornaments of zinc and bell-metal are made by the Kasārs of Chhindwāra as a subsidiary industry to working in brass. The Bharewās, who are apparently an offshoot of Gonds as they will take food from them and are said to speak Gondī, make various brass ornaments for Gond women by casting, and bells and lutes of brass for Gaolī and Gond neatherds. The Kasārs also work by casting and make solid *pairīs* or anklets for women's feet, and toe rings.

Bell-metal is obtained by mixing zinc with brass and is called *niyār*. The village Lohārs or blacksmiths make and repair the iron implements of agriculture, using imported iron. Other iron vessels are obtained from Panāgar in Jubbulpore and Pīparwāni in Seonī. Cart-tyres are imported. The carpenters in Chhindwāra town make European furniture, and carve ornamental woodwork for the fronts of houses. In some houses the cross-beams projecting in front of the door are carved into a semblance of horses' heads. Combs are also made of *shīsham* wood having hollow tops to hold oil, which descends through the teeth on to the hair as it is combed. Besides the Māngs and Basors, the regular basket working castes, the Korkūs are expert at making baskets for holding grain and fish, while the Gonds plait bamboo matting and shutters for doors.

124. The Rathia Kumhārs make bricks and tiles. The cultivators themselves make the *chaukās* or large unbaked square bricks of which many village houses are built. Small unbaked bricks and round lumps of clay are used for walls even in Chhindwāra town. The Chakere Kumhārs work with the potter's wheel. The pots are usually made with red earth but those made of black earth in Sihorā are considered the best. Desia Kumhārs make dolls and models of animals and persons for the Diwāli festival and glaze them with a mixture of lime and mica. *Putarias* or dolls for the Aktī festival are made by Jīngars. Mochīs paint pictures on walls and make country saddles and kites. Almost every village of any size has a family of Chamārs. They make shoes, and leather ropes and thongs and *moths* or well-buckets. These last always consist of the hide of a buffalo. Goat skins are used to cover boxes and baskets. In Mohkher and Umreth *budlās* or leather vessels for holding oil and *ghī* are made by the Budalgir Chamārs, who consider themselves superior to ordinary Chamārs because they will not tan leather. 'The Budhlia or Budalgir

Pottery and leather.

'Chamārs are a melancholy relic of an industry killed by 'western influence. Once they drove a flourishing trade in '*budlās* or leather bags for the transport and storage of *ghī*, 'but the kerosine oil tin has long since ousted the *budlā*'.[1] *Budlās* however are still used by Nais to hold oil for the torches which they carry in processions. *Tarias* or sandals are made for women working in the fields.

Factories.

125. The District has four ginning factories at Mohgaon, Chīchkhedā, Pāndhurnā and Bamhni near Pāndhurnā. All of these except the Mohgaon factory, which dates from 1892, have been opened since 1902. The Chīchkhedā factory is owned by the proprietor of Chīchkhedā and the other three by Mārwāri Baniās and Marāthā Brāhmans. The Bahmnī factory has 34 gins, Chīchkhedā 24, and Mohgaon 12. Two of the factories have not been working for the last two years.

Weights and measures.[2] Measures for grain.

126. The standard measures are *khandīs*, *kuros* and *pailīs* (or *pais*) and the scale is—

1 *pailī* = 100 tolās.
1 *kuro* = 8 *pailīs* or 10 seers.
1 *khandī* = 20 *kuros* or 5 maunds or 200 seers.

The *pailī* may be either the small *pailī* of one seer (80 tolās) or the large *pailī* of 1¼ seers (100 tolās) and any confusion on the point vitiates the most careful enquiry, since a *khandī* may be either 160 seers or 200 seers. At the time of the settlement of 1867 the small *khandī* of 160 seers was in the Chhindwāra tahsīl the universal measure. The *suria* and the *pailī* or *pai* were identical and equivalent to one seer. The large *khandī* of 200 seers based on the

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[1] Monograph on the Leather Industry by Mr. G. Chenevix Trench, C.S., p. 3.

[2] The information on weights and measures is taken from paras. 72 and 73 of Mr. Montgomerie's Settlement Report and from its appendices.

pailī of 1¼ seers came into use after the settlement of 1867 and is now the standard measure. It is however a commercial measure and the small *pailī* and the small *khandī* are still in constant use for seed-grain and for village transactions generally. In Pāndhurnā a *pailī* is equal to 150 tolās and in Chhindwāra the *khandī* is of 2½ maunds or 100 seers. In point of fact a *kuro* measure is rarely used, any amount of grain sold being measured by the *pailī*. The measure used for the small *pailī* of 1 seer is a wooden jar made by the village carpenter and is called a *suria* or *chhotī pailī*; a similar jar to hold half a seer is called an *adhulī*. In the wheat-growing tract on the east of the Chhindwāra tahsīl the village measure was tested by the steelyard and it was found that the wheat measured by the *suria* up to 50 lbs. showed a difference of less than a pound from the weight by steelyard. The measure used in villages for the large *pailī* is an iron jar obtained from Chhindwāra, nominally 1¼ times the *suria*; but it usually holds more than the nominal amount even if the wheat be level with the top. The usual practice is to heap up both the small and large *pailī* in measuring.

Cotton and other articles.

127. In Chhindwāra tahsīl the measure for cotton is :—

1 *khandī* of 20 *paserīs* of 5 seers each or 100 seers.

In Sausar tahsīl uncleaned cotton is measured by a maund of 16 seers and cleaned cotton by one of 12 seers. The *khandī* in the case of the former is of 20 maunds. A *bojhā* of cleaned cotton contains 14 maunds of 12 seers or 336 lbs.

Gur has special measures of its own :—

(either)		(or)	
14 seers	= 1 *man*.	5 seers	= 1 *paseri*
20 *mans* or 280 seers	= 1 *khandī*.	12 *paserīs*	= 1 *dīma*.
		2 *dīmas* (120 seers)	= 1 *gon*.
		12 *gons* (1440 seers)	= 1 *bāhi*.

The table of weights in use for precious metals is :—

8 grains of *khas khas*	=1 grain of rice.
8 grains of rice	=1 *rattī* or *gunj*.
2 *gunjs*	=1 *vāl*.
4 *vāls*	=1 *māsha*.
12 *māshas*	=1 tolā.

A tolā of gold weighs a rupee and 4 *vāls*, while that of silver is just one rupee. Cloth is measured by a yard of 16 *girahs*.

Field areas.

128. The area of land is still calculated by the people in terms of seed sown. Few understand the *bīgha* or acre. The standard for estimating the area of land is the amount of wheat which would be sown in it. Five small *kuros* of wheat (40 seers) usually represent an acre and a *khandī* of land is therefore equivalent to four acres. When wheat is not much grown the standard shifts to kodon-kutkī. Eight seers of kodon or kutkī is often said to sow one acre, but more correctly 12 seers is the average rate. Land is also reckoned by the plough. In wheat land a plough of 4 oxen represents from 20 to 28 acres ; a plough of 2 oxen represents from 10 to 15 acres. In a holding of *kharīf* land the two ox plough represents from 8 to 18 acres. A 'mandā' of land is occasionally mentioned and is the land protected by one field-watching platform (*mandā*). The term is very indefinite ; thus :—

1 *mandā*	= 3	*kuros* of	juār	= 6 acres.
	= 4	,,	kutkī	= 4 ,,
	= 8	,,	gram	= 2 ,,

Markets.

129. More than sixty weekly markets are held in the District. Chhindwāra town has three markets a week and Sausar two. Cattle are sold at Chhindwāra, Pāndhurnā, Rāmākonā, Ubhegaon, Pīpla, Taigaon and Berdī. Of these Chhindwāra and Pāndhurnā are the most important. The largest market in the District is that of Rāmākonā, held on

Sundays. Here the wheat and forest produce of the plateau are brought and disposed of to cartmen and agents who carry them to Nāgpur. The road for the whole distance through the village and beyond it is blocked with carts. Lodhikherā, Pāndhurnā, Palatwāda, Mordongrī and Mohkher are other large markets. Glass bangles and leather vessels are sold at Mohkher and pottery at Chhindwāra, Sihorā and Chānd. Chhindwāra has a timber market.

130. Fairs. The most important annual fairs are those of Jamunia and Rāmākonā. The Jamunia fair falls in February-March on the festival of Shivrātri, and lasts for a fortnight. The attendance varies between 5000 and 10,000 persons and about 300 temporary shops are opened for the sale of goods. An agricultural show is held here and prizes are given. Jamunia is 11 miles from Chhindwāra to the right of the Narsinghpur road. Rāmākonā fair is held on the 6th day of Phāgun Badī (February-March) and is called the Shasthi fair. It is held in honour of the god Vithobā, an incarnation of Krishna, whose temple stands on the Kanhān river. The fair lasts for about five days, the attendance being from 10,000 to 20,000 persons and the people bathe in the Kanhān river. About 300 temporary shops are opened for the sale of jewellery, cloth, vessels and provisions and there is also some trade in cattle. A number of other small gatherings are held for religious purposes but they have little or no commercial importance. Among them may be mentioned the fairs at Raghādevī, Mohgaon, Palatwāda and Umreth; notices of them are given in the Gazetteer articles on these places. A religious fair is held at Nāgadwāri near Pachmarhī on the Nāg Panchamī day. Nāgadwāri is the name of a hill situated in the village of Kajrī, which belongs to the Almod jāgīr, and lies just across the border in the Hoshangābād District. There are a number of caves in the hill. The site of the Mahādeo fair is also now situated in Hoshangābād

TRADE.

Exports.

131. Wheat, cotton, oilseeds and *san*-hemp are the principal exports of agricultural produce. Before the opening of the railway the wheat of the Chaurai plain went along the Seonī road and so down the good road from Seonī to Kamptee and Nāgpur. Considerable quantities of wheat were also taken to Rāmākonā market and thence to Nāgpur and Berār. It now goes by rail from Chaurai station. Some juār is also exported to Nāgpur and at the time when the crops in the northern Districts began to fail it was sent in considerable quantities to Narsinghpur. Cotton is exported from the Sausar tahsīl to Nāgpur and Berār by road. Of oilseeds, til and *jagnī* are the principal. They are sent both to Bombay and Calcutta. Hemp was formerly taken by road to Jubbulpore, but now it is sent by rail to Bombay. There are hemp presses at Chaurai and Chhindwāra. Cattle are sold locally in the east of the Sausar tahsil and taken southwards by the purchasers. *Ghī* is sent to Nāgpur, Kamptee and Jubbulpore but not in such large quantities as formerly. Timber of the teak, *shīsham* (*Dalbergia latifolia*) and *sāleh* (*Boswellia serrata*) trees is sent from the jāgīrs and Government forests to Narsinghpur and Piparia. There is also a considerable southward export of timber to the big markets in the north of the Nāgpur District. Fuel wood is now also sent to Nāgpur and the demand from there has greatly increased its price in Chhindwāra. In the rains timber is floated down the Kanhān to Kamptee. Of minor forest produce lac is an important item. It is sent to Calcutta. Chhindwāra is one of the most important *harrā* producing Districts in the Province and large quantities of myrobalans are sent to Sohāgpur, Narsinghpur and Piparia, chiefly from the jāgīrs. Cutch or catechu is made in the Pagāra jāgīr and exported to the same stations. The oil of *rūsa* or *tikāri* grass (*Andropogon Schœnanthus*) is expressed

and sent away in small quantities. Hides go to Kamptee by rail and road and goat skins are taken there to be sent to Madras. Of garden products, potatoes, chillies and ginger are exported in small quantities. *Gur* or unrefined sugar was formerly an important staple, and was sent to Nāgpur and Berār, but its production has now greatly declined. Live parrots are caught by dealers in the Government forests and exported. Coal is now sent in small quantities from the Pench Valley mines and manganese is brought by road from the mines in Sausar tahsil to Nāgpur.

Imports.

132. The usual articles are imported. Salt comes from Gujarāt through Piparia to Chhindwāra and from Bombay through Nāgpur to Sausar. Mauritius sugar is generally used. *Gur* or unrefined sugar comes from Northern India and also from Bārsi in Sholāpur. English and Indian mill-woven cotton cloths are worn in large villages and towns, and hand-woven cloth in rural tracts. Thread is obtained from the Nāgpur, Jubbulpore and Hinganghāt mills. Country blankets are obtained from Jaipur, Ludhiāna and Cawnpore, and foreign blankets from Bombay. Rice is not grown locally in sufficient quantity to meet the demand and purchasers go to the large Barghāt market on the border of Seonī and Bālāghāt and bring it thence in carts, though specially reduced rates have been given on the railway with the object of attracting the trade. Kerosine oil is universally used for lighting and is also employed as a lubricant for rubbing on the body in cases of rheumatism. Iron, brass and other metals and hardware are imported from Bombay through Nāgpur. Ready-made brassware is obtained from Chīchli in Narsinghpur. Copper vessels are obtained from Cawnpore but not in large quantities. Muhammadans use them for ordinary purposes and Hindus only for religious ceremonies, as copper is a sacred metal. Betel-vine is imported from Narsinghpur, Mandlā, Rāmtek and Berār. Turmeric comes

from Narkher in Nāgpur and from Bombay and the United Provinces. Other spices and condiments, and stationery and small articles of hardware are obtained from dealers in Bombay.

133. The branch railway was opened to Chhindwāra at the end of 1904 and trade immediately took advantage of the new outlet. At the time of writing figures for the year 1905 only are available. The exports in this year amounted to more than 3 lakhs of maunds; the value of the articles for which rates are given, amounting in bulk to about half the total, was more than Rs. 5 lakhs. The imports were 75,000 maunds, valued at more than 6 lakhs. These figures naturally constitute only a proportion of the District trade and probably include little or none of that of Sausar tahsīl, which still finds its most convenient outlet by the road to Nāgpur. Chaurai is the most important exporting station and four-fifths of the total exports were sent from here in 1905, the remaining one-fifth going from Chhindwāra. Chhindwāra, on the other hand, took 70 per cent. of the imports, while only 30 per cent. came to Chaurai.

Rail-borne trade.

134. Messrs. Ralli Brothers and another European firm have agencies at Chaurai for the trade in grain and oilseeds. Muhammadan Cutchīs deal in cloth and condiments and Bohrās in hardware, glassware, stationery and other sundries. Baniās deal in grain, *ghī* and minor forest produce, purchasing this from the Gonds and Mehrās, who bring it from the forests. Banjārās export myrobalans and import rice on pack-bullocks and in carts. Kalārs, Telis and Barais act as middlemen for the trade in grain and oilseeds, buying up their stocks from the cultivators and disposing of them at Rāmākonā market, Chaurai or Chhindwāra to the agents of the large dealers. A considerable amount of the traffic in forest tracts is still carried on by means of pack-animals.

Classes engaged in trade.

COMMUNICATIONS.

135. At the time of Mr. Montgomerie's settlement (1892—94), the Settlement Commissioner wrote as follows on the communications of the District :—'In respect of communications 'the District is one of the most backward in the Provinces ; 'it is not touched by any railway and the headquarters 'is 81 miles from the railway station of Piparia on the north 'and nearly as far from that of Nāgpur on the south. Until 'lately the lack of railway communication was but little 'compensated for by good roads, but Chhindwāra town 'is now connected by fair roads with the two railway 'stations above mentioned and with Seonī, while the 'Nāgpur-Multai road passes through the south-west of the 'Sausar tahsil ; under these conditions trade is much 'handicapped.'

Railways.

Chhindwāra has now been brought on to the railway. The construction of the Seonī-Chhindwāra branch of the Sātpurā narrow-gauge extension of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway was opened for traffic in December 1904. The line runs nearly parallel with the Seonī-Chhindwāra road and has a length of 29 miles in the District with the stations of Chhindwāra, Chaurai and Jhilmilī. In consequence of the opening of the Pench Valley Coal Mines, the railway has been extended for 16 miles to the north of Chhindwāra to Barkui with the stations of Sonā Pipri and Khirsādoh and the earthwork of another branch from Khirsādoh to a mine at Sirgorā has also been constructed. These lines are on the narrow gauge. The survey of a direct line between Chhindwāra and Nāgpur was sanctioned in 1906.

136. At the time of the 30 years' settlement, with the exception of the road connecting Chhindwāra with Nāgpur, there were no regularly laid out or made roads in the District, the only routes being country tracks, all but impassable at certain seasons of the year. Even

Communications in former years.

at Mr. Montgomerie's settlement not much improvement had been made. 'The road from Chhindwāra to Nāg- 'pur was the best, and in spite of several awkward 'river crossings was a very fairly good road. The road 'from Nāgpur to Multai passed through the Sausar tahsil 'and was useful though heavy. But at that time the im- 'provement of the road from Seonī in the Seonī District to 'Chhindwāra was taken up to its great benefit, and the 'road linking Chhindwāra with Matkulī on the Piparia- 'Pachmarhī road was constructed through wild and in- 'accessible country. A new road from Chhindwāra to 'Multai in the Betūl tahsil was also commenced ; the roads 'of the District were therefore undergoing development 'just at the time of resettlement.'[1]

Metalled roads.

137. The necessity of providing for a large amount of unskilled labour during the famines of 1897 and 1900 gave a great impetus to road construction. There are now four first-class roads, metalled and partially bridged and drained ; these lead from Chhindwāra to Nāgpur through Saoner, to Seonī, to Piparia through Matkulī, and to Narsinghpur. The Nāgpur road runs for 47 miles to the border. Up to the present time it has been one of the most important trade routes in the Province, carrying a very great deal of traffic, but the construction of the railway will divert at least a part of this. The ascent of the Sātpurās is made about 27 miles from Chhindwāra by the Silewāni ghāt, between Rāmākonā below and Umrānāla above the hills. The first part of the ascent is called the Banjāri ghāt after some deified Banjārā. People worship there and break a cocoanut before commencing the ascent of the hill. The Chhindwāra-Seonī road runs for 32 miles to the border, crossing the Pench river by a submerged bridge 16 miles from Chhindwāra. It has been the second road in importance up to the present time, carrying a considerable

[1] Settlement Report, para. 20.

amount of traffic from the Chhindwāra tahsīl both to Kamptee and Jubbulpore through Seonī. The wheat of the Chaurai plain went to Kamptee, and hemp, *ghī* and forest produce to Jubbulpore. This road should be almost entirely superseded by the railway which runs parallel to it. It descends to the Chaurai plateau by the slight Panāsi ghāt. The Chhindwāra-Piparia road runs for 65 miles to the border. The first nineteen miles are not metalled. The railway extension to the Pench Valley Coal Mines follows it for 16 miles. Grain and timber are taken by this route to Piparia station. After crossing the Sukrī stream the first ascent begins at the Lahgadria ghāt, some 22 miles from Chhindwāra. The road then rises to Tāmia 35 miles distant, and from here a beautiful view is obtained of the valley of the Denwā and the *sāl* forests on the Mahādeo hills. The road then falls for twelve miles to Delakharī in the valley and afterwards climbs the Mahādeo range to Kanchāri on the border of the District. The Pench is crossed near Belgaon. The Narsinghpur road runs for 64 miles in the District, of which 33 are metalled. Singorī, Amarwāra, Khāpa and Harrai are the principal places on the road. The Pench river is crossed near Singorī. The first ascent near Amarwāra is known as the Bhumkā ghāt, being in the keeping of a deified Bhumkā, and the steepest, lying between Khāpa and Harrai, is Dulhā Deo's ghāt. The road is here bordered by heavy forest frequented by tigers.

Unmetalled roads.

138. Of the unmetalled roads the following are the most important. The Chhindwāra-Multai road runs for 31 miles in the District. The north-west road from Nāgpur to Betūl takes off from the Nāgpur-Chhindwāra road at Saoner and passes for 26 miles through the south-west of the District. Taigaon, Pāndhurnā and Chicholi are the most important villages on the road. The Chhindwāra civil station roads have a length of six miles in and round the

station. The total length of metalled roads in the District is 158 miles. Their construction cost Rs. 8·5 lakhs and the maintenan charges are Rs. 52,000 annually. The Public Works Department also maintain 113 miles of unmetalled roads at a cost of Rs. 21,000 and the District Council have 53 miles of unmetalled roads on which Rs. 1600 are expended for maintenance, and 914 miles of village tracks costing Rs. 2700 annually. It is in contemplation to improve the Chhindwāra-Bordehī road and to construct new roads from Chaurai to Amarwāra, from Khāpa to Nāgalwāri in Nāgpur, and from Sausar to Seonī on the north-west road through Jām, Pīpla and Rajnā.

CHAPTER VI.

FORESTS AND MINERALS.

FORESTS.

Area and character of forests.

139. The Government forests cover an area of 721 square miles or 23½ per cent. of that of the District excluding the jāgirs. Of this area 667 square miles are A class reserved forests and 54 square miles have been demarcated for excision and colonisation on the ryotwār system. The forests lie chiefly on the main southern range of the Sātpurās between the Chhindwāra and Sausar tahsīls and also form scattered blocks on the ascents leading from the Chhindwāra tahsīl to the high level of the jāgīr area. The forests are situated on two principal classes of soil, one derived from the disintegration of trap rock and the other from sandstone. All varieties of soil derived from trap are richer in productive power than those derived from sandstone, and as a rule have better natural reproduction of forest growth. Reproduction is always better on the slopes than on the tops of ridges and in valleys than on plateaus, and on the plains it is better on moist areas. Prior to the 30 years' settlement the forests had been greatly thinned by migratory cultivation and the growth on the land which was then declared to be Government forest is nowhere dense.

Principal timber trees.

140. For administrative purposes the forests are formed into the five ranges of Umreth, Amarwāra, Sānk, Silewāni and Ambāra. The area included in each range is shown in the margin.

Umreth	182	square	miles.
Amārwarā	111	,,	,,
Sānk	106	,,	,,
Silewāni	120	,,	,,
Ambāra	202	,,	,,

The Umreth and Amarwāra ranges comprise the forests of the Chhindwāra plateau and the northern hills. The Sānk range contains those lying in the valley of the Pench river in the east of the Chhindwāra and Sausar tahsīls. The

Silewāni range consists of the forests standing on the steep southern slopes of the Sātpurās, while those of the Ambāra range stand partly on the southern slopes and partly in the valley of the Kanhān below the hills. Pure teak forests occur over small scattered areas in the Silewāni and Ambāra ranges, especially in accessible situations where the associated species have gradually given way before the teak, with the result that at present the latter is growing in too pure a state for the permanent well-being of the forests. Mixed teak forest in which bamboos occur is found chiefly in the same two ranges, occupying hilly areas. In this type of forest reproduction of teak is better than in the preceding one owing to the greater protection of the seedlings. The larger proportion of the trees are coppice growth and spring from old and damaged stools which are not likely to yield big timber. But in Lohāngi in the Ambāra range the teak growing in the valley of the Kanhān river is better than elsewhere, the trees being more lofty and of larger girth. In Murram and Bhūli of the same range teak is very plentiful, covering the crests and slopes of nearly all the hills and spreading into valleys where these latter have escaped the plough. Associated with the teak in mixed forests are an abundance of good species in the undergrowth such as *tinsā* (*Ougeinia dalbergioides*), *lendia* (*Lagerstroemia parviflora*), *sāj* (*Terminalia tomentosa*), *dhaurā* (*Anogeissus latifolia*), *shīsham* (*Dalbergia latifolia*), and *bīja* (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), which await only an opening in the cover and a certain amount of protection to become established as companions to the teak. Bamboos are fairly abundant and of good size and quality in the north of the Ambāra range and on the hill slopes of the Silewāni range. In other ranges they are scarce and scattered. *Tendū* (*Diospyros tomentosa*) and *aonlā* (*Phyllanthus emblica*) are also mainly found in the Silewāni and Ambāra ranges and have good reproduction. The soil on which this type of forest is generally found is a

fairly rich dark sandy loam mixed on the hillsides with nodular standstone, which renders road-making almost impracticable and makes inspection very laborious. In the valleys the soil appears to be mixed with a fair amount of humus. Mixed forest without teak is common over all the division. In this, *sāj*, *tendū*, *achār* (*Buchanania latifolia*), mahuā (*Bassia latifolia*) and *palās* (*Butea frondosa*) predominate and *jamrāsi* (*Elaeodendron Roxburghii*), *moyen* (*Odina Wodier*), *ghotī* (*Zizyphus xylopyra*) and other inferior species are also found. This type usually occurs in low moist valleys or on fairly level areas in which the soil is generally good and well drained. The growth is dense and affords protection to the young crops. An inferior type of dry forest is found principally above the ghāts on soil consisting of a rather stiff well-drained laterite clay. This may be described as an open growth of *khair* (*Acacia Catechu*), *ber* (*Zizyphus Jujuba*), *kullū* (*Sterculia urens*), *gabdī* (*Cochlospermum Gossypium*), *sāleh* (*Boswellia serrata*), *rohan* (*Soymida febrifuga*), *bhirrū* (*Chloroxylon Swietenia*), *reunjhā* (*Acacia leucophloea*), *kusum* (*Schleichera trijuga*) and other trees. The best growth is found on the lower slopes and in the valleys, while the tops of the hills are lightly wooded, principally with *sāleh*. Reproduction is very poor or sometimes completely wanting and protection is absent.

Sources of income.

141. The following statement[1] shows the revenue under the different heads :—

Year.	Timber.	Fuel.	Grass and Grazing.	Bamboos	Minor Produce.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1881-82 ...	5,000	3,000	17,000	3,000	3,000
1891-92 ...	3,000	3,000	35,000	3,000	6,000
1902-03 ...	19,000	7,000	21,000	5,000	6,000
1903-04 ...	19,000	7,000	24,000	4,000	8,000
1904-05 ...	20,000	9,000	26,000	6,000	11,000

[1] In 1902-03 and 1903-04 commutation dues, amounting respectively to Rs. 1250 and Rs. 700, are excluded from the statement.

Teak is the only valuable timber tree in demand for superior buildings and for removal to the large markets in the Nāgpur District. Produce is taken away by purchasers in their own carts and occasionally the Kamptee merchants float it down the Kanhān during the rains. Bamboos also find a ready sale both locally and for export. The demand within the District is chiefly for poles for house-building and agricultural purposes, fuel, bamboos, grazing grass, thorns and brushwood. The propagation of lac is being taken in hand with successful results. The extraction of *rūsa* oil from *tikāri* grass (*Andropogon Schoenanthus*) is another small industry, the prospects of which are not very hopeful. Attempts to develope the breeding of tasar silk cocoons have hitherto failed. Minor forest produce includes mahuā, *achār*, lac, honey and other articles. Honey is got from two kinds of honey bees, a large variety called *agia* and a small one called *jharia*. The large variety clusters principally on *kohā* (*Terminalia arjuna*) trees; the *jharia* variety gives the best honey. This is taken at night by the Korkūs and Pardhāns, who tie a bundle of grass round a bamboo, and, climbing up the tree, set fire to it and thrust it into the comb. The light prevents the bees from seeing the man to attack him. The number of animals grazed in the forests has been about 160,000 annually in recent years, and the income from this source is about Rs. 20,000. About 470 square miles are open to grazing for all animals.

Revenue and management.

142. The following statement shows the income from the Government forests in different years :—

Year.	Receipts.	Expenditure.	Surplus.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1881-82 ...	29,000	8,000	21,000
1891-92 ...	53,000	25,000	28,000
1901-02 ...	66,000	35,000	31,000
1902-03 ..	62,000	35,000	27,000
1903-04 ...	67,000	36,000	31,000
1904-05 ...	77,000	38,000	39,000

Until 1878 the forests were under the management of the Deputy Commissioner, but in that year an officer of the superior forest staff was appointed. The whole area was gazetted as reserved forest in 1879, but up to 1883 a large proportion of it was managed under the Waste Land Rules, and except for a prohibition on cutting certain reserved trees, free access was allowed to every part of the forests. In that year the license system was extended to all forests, but localised and systematic fellings were first introduced in 1895-96 and working-plans for exploitation drawn up. They now exist for all the A class reserves of 665 square miles. In 1904-05 an area of 224 square miles was given A class fire protection at an average cost of Rs. 11-8 per square mile. In this year the forest staff consisted of a Deputy Conservator, two Rangers, five Deputy Rangers, six Foresters and 84 permanent and 24 temporary forest guards.

Private forests.

143. In addition to the Government forests, 441 square miles of mālguzāri forests are included in the occupied area. Of this, 252 square miles are scrub jungle and grass and 189 are tree-forest. The jāgirs also contain 654 square miles of forest land, of which 526 are tree-forest. The whole area of forest in *khālsa* is 1155 square miles or 38 per cent. of the total, while if the jāgirs be included, the combined area is 1809 square miles or 39 per cent. of that of the District. The increased demand for timber and of land for cotton cultivation has made the mālguzārs speculative and generally unmindful of the advantages of the conservancy of forests, and no less than 65 villages have been notified as requiring special protection under section 124 A of the Land Revenue Act. The mālguzāri forests of the Khamārpāni, Ambāra, Aser and Amarwāra tracts contain teak timber. The estimated income from the mālguzāri forests at settlement was Rs. 15,000, at a very moderate computation, the assessment falling at less than an anna per acre on forest and grass land. n many villages the cultivators have a prescriptive right

to collect the mahuā, paying the proprietor an accustomed share, and any attempt to lease the mahuā crop is bitterly resented. Near the Betūl border, where mahuā is very plentiful, the mālguzār's share is said to be three-fourths of the first picking, two-thirds of the second and a half of the third. Where mahuā trees are less plentiful, he takes a smaller share.

Jāgīr forests.

144. The Pachmarhī and Pagāra jāgīrs contain excellent *sāl* forest towards Delakharī, and reproduction of this species from seed is good. The method of conducting fellings in the Pagāra jāgīr has improved, and the rules are better adhered to than formerly. In the Patālkot forests there is a very fair amount of *sāl*, but the locality is quite inaccessible to wheeled traffic at present. The Batkāgarh and Khāpa forests contain some good teak, but fellings have seldom been made flush with the ground. The jāgīr forests also contain considerable quantities of *harrā* trees, and the trade in myrobalans is a valuable asset. The injurious system of shifting cultivation appears to have generally fallen into abeyance in the important forests.

Roadside arboriculture.

145. The only roadside avenue of any length in the District is on the Saoner-Chhindwāra road, where 16 miles are planted. Short lengths also exist on the Seonī-Chhindwāra, Matkulī-Chhindwāra and Narsinghpur-Chhindwāra roads, and these four have been selected for the operations of the Public Works Department, but the total length of avenues established and under maintenance on them is only 27 miles. A yearly grant of Rs. 800 is made from Provincial funds for arboriculture, and in 1904-05 the expenditure was nearly Rs.700, while a sum of more than Rs. 200 was received from the sale of the mango crop and of dry *babūl* trees. Four nurseries have hitherto been maintained on the Nāgpur, Matkulī and Seonī roads, but two of these are to be abolished and a central nursery will be started

at Chhindwāra in lieu of them. The cost of planting a young tree and maintaining it for three years until it is secured from destruction by drought or cattle is taken to be Rs. 6, and the number of trees to be planted in a mile is 350 or one in every 15 feet. The cost of establishing an avenue on a mile of road is therefore Rs. 2100. The District Council appear hitherto to have done little or nothing in the direction of arboriculture, but a beginning has now been made on the Chānd-Chaurai, Chhindwāra-Guraiyā and Sausar-Pāndhurnā roads. Saplings have hitherto been obtained from the Chhindwāra public garden, to which the Council makes a contribution of Rs. 100 annually, but the opening of a nursery at each tahsīl is under consideration. The trees which have been generally planted on roadside avenues are *nīm* (*Melia indica*), *kāranj* (*Pongamia glabra*), mango, tamarind and *babūl* (*Acacia arabica*). Of these, *nīm* and mango do well on both rich and poor soils and *kāranj* thrives on shallow soil. *Nīm* and *kāranj* are more liable to succumb to drought than mango. Tamarind has not been very successful in this District. *Babūl* grows well on trap soils, but requires watering in the hot weather.

MINERALS.

The Pench Valley Coal Mines.

146. The Pench Valley Coal Fields are situated from 12 to 20 miles north-west of Chhindwāra town and extend from Sirgorā on the east nearly to the western border of the District. The coal is found in rocks of the Barākar group of the Dāmuda series of the Gondwāna formation. The Barākars in this basin are separated into several small areas, partly by the overlying trap and partly by faulting. The most important deposits which are now being mined by the Pench Valley Coal Company are situated between Sirgorā, a small village about 12 miles north-west of Chhindwāra town and a mile from the Pench river, and the village of Barkui, 16 miles to the west of Sirgorā. Mining leases over an area nearly 4000 acres

containing these fields were acquired by Messrs. Shaw, Wallace & Company, of Calcutta, who in 1905 formed a company to take over and develop their properties with an initial capital of Rs. 3½ lakhs, the price paid to the vendors being Rs. 50,000 in cash and a lakh of rupees in shares. Their concessions are situated in the villages of Sirgorā, Satia, Dighwāni, Rāwanwāra, Harrai, Dongar, Parāsia, Bhandaria, Chāndāmetā, Butaria, Barkui, Bhājipāni, Eklairā, Ambāra, Ghogrī and Dhau. They include all the seams of coal found in the District, excepting those on the Kanhān and Tawā rivers subsequently described. Their prospectus states that the existence has been proved of 3 seams of coal, the principal one of which is from 10 to 16 feet thick and runs throughout the properties comprised in the leases at a moderate depth from the surface, and it is estimated that the properties should contain about 50 million tons of marketable coal. A branch narrow-gauge line has been constructed by the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway from Chhindwāra to Barkui, and earth-work of another branch from Khirsādoh to Sirgorā has been laid. It was estimated that an annual output of 150,000 tons of coal should be obtained at a cost of Rs. 2-6 per ton, and that it would fetch a price of Rs. 4-8 per ton. The samples so far tested have given encouraging results, both in stationary and locomotive engines. The following percentage analysis will give an idea of the quality of the coal :—

	Volatile matter.	Fixed Carbon.	Ash.
Barkui	26	50·3	23·7
Sirgorā	28	61·6	10·4

Mining operations were started in the village of Chāndāmetā near Barkui in December 1905. The colliery is now worked by steam power. The output of coal in 1906 was 32,000 tons, valued at one lakh, of which the Company sold 23,000 tons. The coal is now carried out of the Chāndāmetā mine by trucks worked by machinery up a sloping

shaft, but carriers are still employed to fill the trucks. The number of daily labourers employed above ground in 1906 was 32 and below ground 196. The wages ordinarily earned by men working as miners are 8 annas a day, and by women working as carriers 4 to 5 annas. Children are only employed below ground to carry lamps. The mines are provided with up-to-date English appliances and are under the management of Mr. Ditmas.

Other coal deposits. The Kanhān field.

147. In addition to the seams already being exploited by the Pench Valley Coal Company, some others have been described by Mr. Jones in his article on 'The Southern Coal-fields of the Sātpurā Gondwāna basin'[1]. The next field to the west is the Kanhān field, named after the river, which in the earlier part of its course flows across it. Its area is 12 square miles. In the small stream near the site of the deserted village of Badeo, just south of the pathway between the villages of Datlā and Panāra, seven feet of coal are exposed in the left bank and coal also forms the bed of the stream. The thickness of the seam is at least 10 feet. The dip is to the north at 10°, and the coal is overlaid by surface soil. In the Takia river, almost due west of this spot, the same seam is exposed again at a distance of about a third of a mile from the first exposure. There is no reason to suppose that it is not the same seam, as the dip is the same and there is no apparent break in the rocks, while it is just where it might be expected to reappear. The section is much spread out and partially concealed, but thicknesses of 3 to 5 feet of coal are visible in several places. It is not certain whether these are all repetitions of the same seam or not. Just below Panāra on the Takia river is a spot where the water falls over some massive sandstone into a shallow pool below. Immediately under the sandstone and in contact with it, 8 feet of good looking coal is exposed dipping to the north at 10°. Other small seams are seen at Purenā, Nandorā and Dāmua.

[1] Memoirs of the Geological Survey, Vol. XXIV, Part 1.

The Tawā field.

148. The Tawā field is the most extensive continuous area of Barākar rocks exposed in the Sātpurā basin, being 19 miles in length from east to west and 8 miles across in its widest part. It covers an area of 79 square miles; but in spite of this considerable area the number of coal seams exposed is not large, though two of them are of fair thickness. A detailed account of the positions of all the seams is given in Mr. Jones' article already referred to, and this can only be summarised here. An important seam was found in the bed of the Tāmia river nearly opposite and to the east of the small village of Tansī. Going up the stream the seam is first seen on the left bank, close to a small quartz vein which runs nearly north-east and south-west. A few yards further up the river, five feet of coal are exposed, and by an excavation two more seams aggregating two and a half feet were discovered below this or a thickness of 7½ feet in all. The situation of the seam does not however appear very favourable for profitable working. The Tāmia falls into the Tawā near Chomau. In the Bārādhār river, above Dodrāmau and half a mile below the point where the small stream from Bakāri comes in, a two-feet seam of coal is exposed. Another small seam is exposed in the Tawā to the south-east of the deserted village of Bhogī-Khāpa. Coal also appears in the small stream which runs past Patākhedā, and enters the Tawā at the point where this river turns north after flowing to the west past Silewāni. Some little way up this stream on the right bank a section of 18 feet is exposed containing altogether five feet of coal, in one seam of three feet and two of one foot each below it. A little further up a very thick seam of coal was seen; the top foot was very bright and bituminous and was faulted against the sandstone above it; below this was some ordinary dull coal with bright bands and some shale at the bottom. The thickness of the coal at the outcrop was 11 feet.

149. Deposits of manganese ore occur in the tract to the south of Sausar and round Rāmākonā. Mr. Fermor[1] gives the following list of 11 villages in which manganese has been found :—Kāchhi Dhāna, Lakhanwāra, Gaimukh, Sītāpār, Bichhua, Alesur, Deni, Ghotī, Waghorā, Gowāri Wādhonā, Dudhāra. All these lie in the tract already mentioned, the first seven villages being situated round Rāmākonā. Mining and prospecting leases have been taken out, the principal companies engaged being Gow-Smith, Whiffin and Company and Rai Sāhib Mathurā Prasād, of Chhindwāra. Mining has been commenced at Sītāpār and Kāchhi Dhāna and some ore has been sent to Nāgpur by road, but the cost of carriage is at present too heavy to enable the ore to compete successfully with the more favourably situated deposits of Nāgpur and Bālāghāt. Mr. Fermor[2] describes the Central Provinces ore as follows :—'In the Nāgpur Bālāghat area, comprising 'the Districts of Bhandāra, Bālāghāt, Chhindwāra and 'Nāgpur, the manganese ore occurs as lenticular bands and 'masses, intercalated parallel to the strike, in the quartzites, 'schists and gneisses. The ore is frequently found to pass 'both laterally and along the strike into partly altered or 'quite fresh spessartite-quartz-rock, or rhodonite-spessartite-'quartz-rock. The typical rock from which these manga-'nese ore deposits have been at least in part derived is this 'spessartite-quartz-rock, often containing a small quantity 'of apatite and usually quite free from felspar. Although 'the evidence is not so conclusive as in the Vizagapatam 'District, yet it seems probable that here also the original 'manganese-bearing rock was intruded in the molten condi-'tion into the metamorphic schists and gneisses.' Mr. Fermor's paper, from which the above quotation is made, contains a full and interesting description of the manganese

Manganese.

[1] Manganese in India by L. L. Fermor. Transactions of the Mining and Geological Institute of India, Vol. I., p.p. 69-131 (1906).

[2] Loc. cit., p. 91.

of the Central Provinces and the prospects of the mining industry. In a second paper by the same author, a fuller account of the Chhindwāra manganese deposits is given with analyses[1].

Other minerals.

150. Good building sandstone is found in Sirgorā and near Chhindwāra and in several villages in Umreth circle. From a quarry in Bichhua Bāgu near Rāmākonā, slabs of white sandstone 12 feet long and 2 or 3 feet wide, are obtained. Limestone is found in several villages in the Chhindwāra and Mohkher circles. It is smelted locally with layers of limestone between layers of wood and is sold at from 12 to 17 rupees per 100 cubic feet. Clay mixed with mica is obtained from a quarry in Palāspāni Khurd in the Khamārpāni tract and is used for plastering the walls of houses.

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[1] Notes on the Petrology and Manganese-ore deposits of the Sausar tahsīl, Chhindwāra District, Central Provinces. Records, Geol. Sur. of Ind., XXXIII., pp. 207—214 (1906).

CHAPTER VII.

FAMINE.

Famines in past years.

151. On the whole the District has been comparatively more exempt from famine than most others in the Province. No records exist prior to 1868. In that year, which witnessed the Bundelkhand famine, the monsoon ceased prematurely in Chhindwāra, and the autumn harvest partly failed, while the spring crops were poor owing to the absence of cold weather rain. Some distress was felt in the Sausar tahsil. In 1876-77 the autumn crops were damaged by excessive rain and heavy floods, the rainfall of the year being 49·88 inches. In 1877-78, heavy downpours in December, followed by frost in January, caused rust in the wheat crop and destroyed the linseed. This year is still remembered as the *Jhirī kī sāl* or Rust Year. In 1879-80 the autumn crops were poor owing to excessive rain. The District was peculiarly fortunate during the cycle of bad seasons from 1892 to 1897. In the first three wet years there was no real failure, and in 1893-94 bumper crops were reaped. In 1895-96 the rains stopped prematurely, but the autumn harvest was satisfactory; the spring crops did not germinate well on account of the hardness of the ground, and wheat was about a half crop. Some distress was felt in this year, the birth-rate falling from 44 to 35 per mille. The year pressed very unequally on the cultivators. The poorer tracts were distressed, but in the richer parts of the Sausar and Chhindwāra tahsīls, where juār was not much affected by the drought and wheat gave from an average to a full outturn, many of them, especially those who had stocks laid by, profited much by the high prices, and either cleared themselves of debt or laid by a balance in cash. The price of juār, the staple food-grain of the District, rose from 25½ seers in 1894 to 16 in 1895 and 15 in 1896.

152. In the year 1896 the monsoon stopped abruptly in Chhindwāra as elsewhere at the end of August. The kodon-kutki crop gave only 15 per cent. and juār 45 per cent. of normal, but cotton was above an average outturn. The ground was too hard in many places for the spring crops to be sown, but welcome showers in November assisted germination, and the harvest was about half an average. Severe distress was confined to the jāgīrs and hilly parts of the *khālsa*, comprised in the Amarwāra, Umreth and Ambāra circles. The main works were the construction of the Chhindwāra-Narsinghpur road and the metalling of that from Matkulī to Belgaon, as these were favourably situated in the distressed area. Tanks were constructed or improved at Tāmia, Harrai, Dhanorā and Gorpāni in the jāgīrs. Relief centres were opened in the jāgīrs to the number of fifteen, at which cooked food was distributed. The highest number of persons relieved was 24,000 or 6 per cent. of the population in October 1897, and the expenditure was Rs. 5·7 lakhs, in addition to about a lakh distributed in charitable grants. The mortality rose to nearly 8 per mille per mensem in September, the rate for the year being 52. The average price of juār for the year was 10½ seers, but at some periods it was not procurable. Wheat was less than 9 and rice 7 seers. Outside the jāgīrs the District was not severely affected and the cropped area actually rose in the following year.

The scarcity of 1897.

153. The two next seasons were on the whole quite favourable in Chhindwāra, but in 1899-1900 the rains completely failed. The total amount received was only 16 inches, the fall for August being only 4 inches and for September one. All the crops failed, the combined outturn being only 23 per cent. of normal. Relief-works were started in October 1899, and altogether 12 camps were opened under the Public Works Department. The embankment of the railway

The famine of 1900.

from Seonī to Chhindwāra was made, and besides the improvement of various roads, 21 new tanks were constructed and 17 repaired. The most important new tanks were those at Konājhir and Guhārgaon, the former costing Rs. 6500 and the latter Rs. 9000. In addition to this 19 new tanks were constructed and 27 repaired through the agency of civil officers. Grass-cutting operations were undertaken in the Government and jāgīr forests, and about 6000 tons were cut altogether at a cost of Rs. 46,000. Nearly 1400 tons were despatched to Piparia and taken over by the Government of Bombay. The distribution of cooked food was undertaken on a large scale, 87 kitchens being open in May 1900 and 176 in July, in which month a total of 46,000 persons were receiving cooked food at them. Relief operations continued from October 1899 to October 1900, the highest number of persons assisted being 71,000 or 17 per cent. of the population in July. The expenditure was Rs. 16 lakhs and about 2 lakhs were also distributed in charitable grants and Government loans. About half the annual demand for land revenue was suspended. A good deal of assistance was rendered by private individuals. Rām Singh, the mālguzār of Pīpla Narainwār, employed a large number of persons in his village on the embankment of fields and water channels. The Swedish Mission of Chhindwāra expended about Rs. 20,000 and employed some hundreds of persons in the improvement of their fields and premises. In the Pachmarhī, Pagāra and Gorakhghāt jāgīrs, which were under the Court of Wards, a large number of wells were built and repaired. Until the middle of May the mortality was extremely low, but with the outbreak of cholera in that month it rose rapidly, and in June, July and August was extremely severe, the average rate for this period being nearly 14 per mille per month. The death-rate for the year was 84 and the birth-rate 40 per mille. Juār sold at

between 9 and 10 seers per rupee in March 1900, the rate for the year being 13 seers, while those of wheat and rice were 8½ and 9½ seers respectively. Although prices were high, no difficulty was experienced by the cultivators in obtaining seed. The difficulty of providing relief for the forest tribes must always be considerable in Chhindwāra, but the attitude of the Gonds and Korkūs was much less suspicious in 1900 after the experience of the famine ot 1897, and it may be anticipated that they will on future occasions be still less reluctant to accept assistance.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

Revenue administration under native rule.

154. No records survive from which any account can be given of the revenue management under the Gond and Gaolī systems.

As to the revenue system under Marāthā rule, Mr. Ramsay's Settlement Report of 1869 is quoted :—

'After the peace of Deogaon in 1803, the dominions of 'the Nāgpur State, though greatly diminished in extent, 'were yet made to produce the same revenue as before 'the dismemberment. A regular system of extortion and 'rackrenting was put in force and continued until the war 'with Appa Sāhib, when the country came under British 'management during the minority of the late Rājā. At 'that time the greater part of the Chhindwāra District was 'utterly waste; what villages there were had been reduced 'to utter poverty by years of extortion and misrule. The 'good effects of our rule were soon apparent. Remissions 'of old balances of revenue were made to a large extent 'and every encouragement was given to settlers to take up 'land. During the following years population and revenue 'increased hand in hand, and the improvement has lasted 'more or less to the present day. The assessment, however, 'was always extremely high, leaving little or no profit 'to the mālguzār. The latter derived his chief profit from 'the cultivation of the *sīr* land. Under these circumstances 'it is not to be wondered at that villages were perpetually 'changing hands. Much also depended on the will or 'caprice of the *sūbah*, who had friends to serve or enemies 'to spite, and a mālguzār might, at any moment, be removed 'to make a way for another. Again during unfavourable 'seasons, the tenants would fail to pay their rents and little 'or no allowance would be made for this in collecting the

'revenue. The defaulting mālguzār would be sold up and 'the village made over to the first speculator who might 'come forward and be in a position to produce the necessary 'security. I have said that the profit allowed to the 'mālguzār was very small; generally speaking it came to '15 per cent. on the rental, including the *sīr* land. Out of 'this, besides the pay of kotwār and patwāri, the amount of 'which was left to his discretion, he had to pay a small sum 'towards the maintenance of the District revenue establish-'ment, and also towards certain charitable payments and 'allowances, and he was also liable at any time to be called 'upon to pay an extra cess or *bargān* as it was called, over 'and above the regular *jamā*. These causes, combined 'with the low prices of grain prevailing, had brought the 'mālguzārs to a very low state at the time when the 'country finally was annexed to the British dominions in '1854.'

Assessments between 1854 and 1865.

155. When we took over the District in 1854, a substantial remission of Rs. 48,000 was given, and general cesses levied in addition to the revenue demand were abolished. Triennial settlements, based on the village rent-rolls, were made. These still absorbed a large fraction of the assets, and the last summary settlement made before Mr. Ramsay's operations absorbed about 80 per cent. of the gross assets, the demand being Rs. 2·45 lakhs.

The 30 years' settlement.

156. It was clear, therefore, that in the settlement of 1863—67, reduction towards a half-assets standard would involve a decrease of the revenue demand, and that what rent enhancement should be effected, would merely serve to diminish the reduction of the revenue.

In his settlement of 1867, Mr. Ramsay had to compile the whole record from the beginning. He got the village surveyed with maps on the scale of 12¼ inches to the mile. He had the village papers prepared. He enquired into the

claims of the various applicants for proprietary right in each village, and in 1435 villages conferred mālguzāri proprietary rights on 2788 persons, thus making two mālguzārs to a village on the average. He awarded *mālik-makbūza* rights, carrying proprietary rights in a holding, to 56 of such relatives of the proprietors as held land at favourable and fixed rates, and to 16 cultivators of long standing who showed some title to proprietary right, *e.g.*, by sinking an unusual amount of capital in their land; also to 361 *ex-muāfidārs*—altogether to 456 persons. He also classified the tenants as hereditary or non-hereditary. Among the hereditary tenants, he awarded absolute-occupancy right to 6110, whose claim to their fields was very strong. Of the remainder, 3764 tenants, who had held for a term of 12 years, were declared "conditional hereditary," and 13,002 tenants of less than 12 years' standing were declared tenants-at-will and recorded as non-occupancy. He drew up a general record-of-rights, the "Wājib-ul-arz," and recorded in detail rights in wells and trees. The area in which proprietary rights were reserved by Government amounted to 790,000 acres or 26 per cent. of the District area excluding the jāgīrs.

The revenue demand.

157. In fixing the revenue demand, Mr. Ramsay calculated what the fair rental of the tract would be and what the assets would consequently be, and fixed his revenue at about half the estimated assets. To estimate the fair rental he used three valuations: a valuation by acreage rates for different kinds of soil; a valuation by plough rents for the area in occupation, and a valuation by taking a share of the estimated produce. In his preliminary calculations, he found that the application of his rates indicated an increase in the rental, justified by rise in prices, &c., and that a settlement made at half his estimated assets would give a reduction of about 10 per cent. on the existing Government demand, and would fall at about 70 per cent.

upon the assets as recorded prior to settlement and the adjustment of rents. He accordingly calculated his revised revenue, making a reduction on the existing revenue of about 11 per cent. in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, about 6 per cent. in the Sausar tahsīl, and about 9 per cent. in the District as a whole. The revised revenue amounted to Rs. 2·14 lakhs and fell at 7½ annas per acre in cultivation.

Rental enhancement.

158. The enhancement of rents was only an incidental part of the settlement proceedings, and followed rather than preceded revenue enhancement. An idea had got abroad that rents could only be altered at the time of settlement. When that time came, the new rent was duly entered up. If the mālguzār and tenant agreed to maintain the existing rent or to impose an enhanced rent, the sum agreed on was recorded. In case of dispute a formal decision, usually with the help of arbitrators, was, it is said, recorded. The rent enhancement effected was very moderate. In both the Chhindwāra and Sausar tahsīls and consequently in the whole District, it amounted to 7 per cent. The revised rent-roll, including the assessment of the *sīr*, then stood at Rs. 3·35 lakhs. The actual enhancement of rents effected was not nearly so large as the probable enhancement brought out by Mr. Ramsay's calculations, and the half-assets settlement on theoretical assets fell at 65 per cent. of the assets as they finally stood after re-settlement.

Currency of the 30 years' settlement.

159. During the currency of the 30 years' settlement the District prospered greatly. The cultivated area increased by 60 per cent. and the area actually cropped by 41 per cent., the increase being larger in the backward tahsil of Chhindwāra than in the more fully populated Sausar tahsil. The rental payments of the tenants were increased by over a lakh and the proprietors added 63,000 acres to their home farm. Agricultural prices rose by at least 50 per

cent. above those on which the former settlement was based. And the population increased by 24 per cent. The 30 years' settlement expired between the years 1895 and 1897.

The recent settlement. Cadastral survey.

160. The maps of the settlement of 1868 were not of sufficient accuracy to form the basis of the present re-settlement, and re-survey prior to settlement was consequently made on the scale of 16 inches to the mile. The cadastral survey, based on a traverse, was completed between the years 1887 and 1891. The traverse survey cost Rs. 63,000 and the cadastral survey Rs. 71,000, the combined cost falling at 1½ annas per acre. The survey did not extend to the jāgīrs.

Dates of settlement work.

161. Settlement operations began at the end of 1891 and Mr. Dorī Lāl was posted to the District as Settlement Officer. But he had hardly joined his appointment before he was attacked by illness which bore down his constitution, weakened, it may be feared, by exposure to the sun and to bad climates, and by incessant work in the service of Government. He was removed to Jubbulpore and died there in 1892, when he was succeeded by Mr. C. W. Montgomerie, who accomplished the settlement of the whole District and wrote the Report. This contains a full and interesting account of the District and its population and resources, and a considerable part of it has been reproduced in the Gazetteer. The settlement of the Chhindwāra tahsīl was taken up before that of Sausar tahsīl, and the jāgīrs, in which only a summary inquiry was necessary, were left to the last. The villages of the *khālsa* area were inspected by the Settlement Officer between 1892 and 1894. Assessment work was completed by June 1895 and the operations were brought to a close in December 1895. The settlement was made on the valuation of soils according to the soil-unit system described in the Central Provinces Settlement Code.

162. The total rental of the District as ascertained at the time of assessment was Rs. 3·66 lakhs and exceeded by 40 per cent. the rental recorded at the last settlement, which was Rs. 2·62 lakhs.

Rental enhancement.

During the term of settlement the cropped area had increased by 41 per cent., so that the increase in rental corresponded with the increase in the cropped area. This comparison is fairer than a comparison between the increase in rental and the increase in the occupied or cultivated area, for more attention was given to the record of fallow at the new settlement than at the old. Some poorer soil had been brought under cultivation, so that in reality there was a slight rise in the total rental incidence. Rents had been only slightly enhanced by 7 per cent. at the last settlement, and the rise in prices fully justified the further enhancement of rents. The total rental was accordingly raised from Rs. 3·66 to Rs. 4·09 lakhs or by 12 per cent. Of this it may be said that it was, in view of the rise in prices, a very moderate enhancement.

The following statement shows the results of rental enhancement per acre for the different classes of tenants at a glance :—

	Previous settlement.	Before revision.	Revised.	Enhancement.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p	Rs. a. p.	Per cent.
Mālik-makbūza	0 5 7	0 5 6	0 7 6	36
Absolute-occupancy ...	0 13 11	0 14 5	1 0 4	13
Occupancy	0 10 2	0 8 0	0 9 6	19
Ordinary	0 7 3	0 7 2	0 7 4	2
All tenants	0 9 11	0 8 8	0 9 9	12

The enhancement was generally confined to the settled cultivation of wheat lands of Chhindwāra tahsil, and the juār-cotton lands of Sausar, but little increase being made in the backward tracts, where Gonds and Korkūs carry on rude cultivation amidst the forests.

163. The following statement of the incidence of the revised rental on the different classes of soil has been calculated from the average unit rates of each group given in the Settlement Annexures. The statement shows that soils were much more highly rated in the Sausar than in the Chhindwāra tahsīl :—

Soil factors and rates on soils.

Class of Soil.	Chhindwara Tahsil.		Sausar Tahsil.	
	Soil factors.	Deduced rental.	Soil factors.	Deduced rental.
		Rs. a. p.		Rs. a. p.
Kāli I	40	1 7 7	40	2 5 7
Kāli II	34	1 4 0	36	2 1 10
Morand I	32	1 2 10	32	1 14 1
Morand II	24	0 14 1	24	1 6 6
Khardī I	...	...	14	0 13 1
Mutbarrā and Sahrā ...	14	0 8 3	...	...
Kachhār	40	1 7 7	32	1 14 1

164. The *Mālik-makbūza* or plot-proprietor class held only 7000 acres or one per cent. of the occupied area. Their rental was raised from Rs. 2500 to Rs. 3400 or by 37 per cent., giving an incidence of R. 0-7-6 per acre. The revised assessment absorbed only 53 per cent. of the deduced rental. But with the ordinary *mālik-makbūza* payments are included the quit-revenues payable on a number of holdings, and these quit-revenues, many of them commutations at one-half revenue, reduce the fraction taken of the total deduced rent. If the *kāmil-jamā* of the quit-revenue plots were substituted for the quit-revenue, the *mālik-makbūza* assessment would rise to 61 per cent. of the deduced rental. A drawback of 15 per cent. was allowed to the mālguzār for collecting the payments. *Mālik-makbūza* right was also during settlement operations conferred on certain ex-proprietors, who before the passing of the Central Provinces

Mālik-makbūzas.

Tenancy Act of 1883 had reserved land to themselves when they sold their villages.

Absolute occupancy tenants.

165. The area held by absolute occupancy tenants had decreased during the term of settlement by 14 per cent., from 128,000 to 110,000 acres, chiefly from relinquishments by migratory Gonds and absorption into the home farm. These tenants held the pick of the tenancy land and, as the unit incidences showed, did not pay particularly high for it, and an enhancement of 13 per cent. was imposed, raising their payments from Rs. 99,000 to Rs. 1·12 lakhs, the incidence per acre being R. 1-0-4. Some of the absolute occupancy tenants in Sausar tahsil formed an exception to the rate that the class did not pay high. They held the best lands and their forefathers had in the earliest days of Marāthā rule clung to the lands and paid competition rents for them. These rents became stereotyped and continued through the 30 years' settlement up to the time of re-settlement, but though the rise in prices had enabled them to be paid with ease, they were not liable to enhancement to the same extent as the others.

Occupancy tenants.

166. The area held in occupancy right had increased during the term of settlement from 86,000 to 279,000 acres under the operation of the 12 years' rule of possession. The rents, however, had not risen to the same degree and this class afforded the greatest scope for increase in rental. Their payments were raised from Rs. 1·40 to Rs. 1·66 lakhs or by 19 per cent., the incidence per acre being R. 0-9-6.

Ordinary tenants.

167. The holdings of ordinary tenants increased during the term of settlement from 210,000 to 284,000 acres or by 35 per cent. The rental had increased in the same proportion and no general enhancement was attempted. But levelling up very low rents brought out a small increase of nearly

3 per cent., the payments being raised from Rs. 1·27 to Rs 1·30 lakhs, and giving an incidence of R. 0-7-4 per acre.

Home farm and miscellaneous income.

168. The valuation of the home farm of the proprietors which was based in almost every case upon the same unit-rate as that used for tenant land, worked out to R. 0-10-4 an acre. The part sublet was found to be paying R. 1-2-0 an acre, but much of the *khudkāsht* was of inferior value. Taking both these facts into consideration, the valuation seemed a very fair one in comparison with R. 1-0-4 for the pick of the land in the possession of absolute occupancy tenants, and R. 0-9-9, the all-round tenant rate. There was a considerable increase in the estimate of *siwai* income taken for purposes of assessment from Rs. 4000 to Rs. 15,000. The increased valuation was due mainly to the enhanced commercial value of forest produce, particularly myrobalans and mahuā. The final estimate was only a half of that first made by attesting officers at their village inspection, and fell at less than an anna per acre of the total area under tree-forest and scrub jungle

Comparison of assets.

169. The following statement compares the assets as revised with those of the 30 years' settlement :—

	At 30 years' settlement.	At settlement of 1892-94.
Mālik-makbūzas' payments and tenants' rental	Rs. 2,65,000	Rs. 4,11,000
Rental value of sīr and khudkāsht land	60,000	1,17,000
Siwai income	4,000	15,000
Total ...	3,29,000	5,43,000

Revenue enhancement.

170. The land revenue at the settlement of 1868 was assessed at 65 per cent. of the actual assets. During the period of settlement, the rental payments of tenants increased by over a lakh, while the proprietors also added about 63,000 acres to their home farm. About Rs. 3000

were added to the land revenue during the currency of settlement on account of clearance leases and other resumptions and the revised demand was assessed at Rs. 2·97 lakhs, falling at 55 per cent. of the revised assets and giving an increase of Rs. 80,000 or 37 per cent. over the former payments. Out of the revenue Rs. 6000 were assigned and the net revenue was Rs. 2·91 lakhs. Of the increase of Rs. 80,000, Rs. 43,000 were covered by enhancement of rents, so that the net decrease in the proprietors' incomes was only Rs. 37,000. Substantial leniency was thus shown in reducing from 65 to 55 the fraction of assets taken by Government. Upon a moderate estimate of the gross outturn of crops, the revised demand absorbed less than 3 per cent. of the produce. The revised assets of the proprietors were 67 per cent. larger than those at the 30 years' settlement, while the land revenue was raised only 37 per cent. The settlement successfully stood the strain of the bad seasons following on its introduction, the collections amounting to 94 per cent. of the demand during the years 1895—1901 in spite of the famines. Under these circumstances no permanent reductions in the assessments were found necessary.

Period and cost of settlement.

171. The period of settlement varies from 14 to 17 years, being due to expire in June 1910 in the Chhindwāra tahsīl and in June 1911 in Sausar tahsīl. The total cost of the settlement, including the survey, was Rs. 2·54 lakhs or Rs. 113 per square mile, and excluding the survey Rs. 54 per square mile. In this calculation the area of the jāgīrs, amounting to 1597 square miles, has not been taken into account, though a considerable amount of labour and money was expended upon the revision of the *takolīs*.

Cesses.

172. The demand on account of the road, school and postal cesses in 1904-05 was about Rs. 18,000, for additional rates Rs. 6500 and for patwāri cess Rs. 18,000, making Rs. 42,500

in all. The additional rate and patwāri cess were abolished in 1905 and 1906 respectively, and the demand for cesses was thus reduced to Rs. 18,000. The education cess is calculated at 2 per cent. on the land revenue, the road cess at 3 per cent., and the postal cess at ½ per cent. This last cess is now credited to the funds of the District Council and added to the road cess, making it up to 3½ per cent.

Statistics of tenures.

173. In the *khālsa* portion of the District the area included in holdings in 1904-05 was 951,000 acres and was distributed as follows:—114,000 acres or 12 per cent. of the total consisted of *sīr* land and 93,000 or nearly 10 per cent. of *khudkāsht* land. Absolute occupancy tenants held 104,000 acres or 11 per cent., occupancy tenants 266,000 acres or 28 per cent. and ordinary tenants 360,000 acres or 38 per cent. of the occupied area. About 6000 acres were held rent-free from the proprietors or in lieu of service. Since the settlement the area held by occupancy tenants has decreased by 13,000 acres, and that held by absolute occupancy tenants by 6000 acres, while ordinary tenants have increased their holding by 77,000 acres. The area included in holdings in the jāgirs in 1904-05 was 229,000 acres, of which 24,000 or 10 per cent. were held by proprietors or lessees and the balance by tenants. The area occupied in ryotwāri villages was 25,000 acres, of which 3000 were held by patels and the remainder by ryots. The total occupied area was thus more than 1,200,000 acres. About 17,000 acres were sublet in 1904-05 at an average rent of R. 1-2-11 per acre as against the rate of R. 1-2-0 at settlement.

Revenue-free and other grants.

174. More than 56,000 acres, consisting of villages or shares of villages and 2000 acres contained in holdings, were held wholly or partially revenue-free in 1904-05, the amount of revenue assigned being Rs. 5000. At settlement Rs. 6000 of revenue were assigned, and the amount has apparently decreased in the intervening period owing to

resumptions. In addition to this, 26 villages, with an area of 42,000 acres, are held on perpetual revenue. Including these the total amount of revenue assigned was Rs. 9700 at settlement. Little revenue was alienated by previous governments. The Gonds, it is true, gave jāgīrs to the jāgīrdārs on nominal conditions, but the Marāthā Government alienated but little revenue. In the Sausar tahsīl, which was nearer to Nāgpur, some grants were made, but the Chhindwāra tahsīl is comparatively free from such burdens on the revenue. A total of 10 villages with an area of 11,000 acres are held free of revenue for a life or lives, and 38½ villages and 169 plots with an area of 49,000 acres are held on commuted revenue. These latter had been formerly granted free of revenue for a life or lives and were afterwards treated under Circular No. 46 of 1866, which permitted commutation at half revenue in perpetuity when the revenue was for one life, at $\frac{6}{16}$ when the remission was of the total revenue for one life and of half the revenue for another life, and at quarter revenue when the remission was for two lives. Most of those who held revenue-free for a limited period agreed during the settlement of 1868 to commute on these terms. At re-settlement the commuted payments were raised to the same fraction of the revised revenue demand of the villages. The villages held on perpetual revenue are those which were granted under former governments on a *maktā* tenure. The *maktā* tenure was apparently simply a perpetual settlement at a normal revenue; it implied freedom from additional demands and security of tenure, but no remission of revenue, and at the settlement of 1868 the perpetual revenue exceeded the proper demand, as this was reduced. Now, however, the perpetual revenue is less than the full revenue, the latter being Rs. 20,000 and the former Rs. 16,000. The families of former rulers hold most of the 26 perpetually settled villages, the Gond Rājā having 9 villages and the Bhonsla Rājā 13.

175. A certain number of plots were sold during the years immediately following Mr. Ramsay's settlement under the rules then in force for the sale of waste lands. These plots were sold free of revenue and are subject only to the payment of cesses. Their total area is 4600 acres and the revenue alienated on them is Rs. 900. A list of the villages in which they are situated is given in paragraph 192 of Mr. Montgomerie's Report. Superior and inferior proprietors co-exist in 142 villages. These are mainly situated in the jāgirs, and there are four in Chhindwāra tahsīl *khālsa* and 21 in Sausar tahsīl. In 14 cases the settlement was made with the inferior in preference to the superior proprietors. The grant of protected status has been made to the lessees of three villages. There are 10 forest villages with an area of about 3000 acres under the management of the Forest Department.

Special tenures.

176. The Government forests contain no extensive stretches of culturable land, but formerly included a number of forest villages. At the conference held in Pachmarhī in 1891, the excision of most of these was recommended, and it was estimated that some 50 square miles of forest land would thus be made available for cultivation. The proposals for excision were made principally with the object of separating from the forests such land as was actually under cultivation with a proportion of culturable land adjoining it. In a number of cases also the forest boundaries were rectified where they were inconvenient to the people. The bulk of the excisions were made from the Umreth range and a smaller number from the Amarwāra, Ambāra and Sānkh ranges. In 1904-05 a regular settlement of the ryotwāri villages was completed by Mr. Chunnī Lāl. The number of villages settled was 85 and the total area comprised in them was 35,000 acres, of which 20,000 acres were occupied and 12,500 cultivated. The soil is generally stony and of poor quality, but patches

Ryotwāri settlement.

of black soil are found in some of the villages. The cultivators are principally Gonds. The assessment imposed was Rs. 5600 or at the rate of 4½ annas per occupied acre. The settlement will expire in 1911-12 concurrently with the mālguzāri settlement of the respective tahsīls. In some cases the ryotwāri land was attached to a neighbouring mālguzāri village, a slight increase being made in the revenue, and a cash payment being taken from the mālguzār in certain instances. In 1906 there were 87 ryotwāri villages, 59 in Chhindwāra tahsīl and 28 in Sausar. The demand for land revenue in them was Rs. 5085 and for cesses Rs. 687. The patels receive a commission of 2 or 3 annas in the rupee on the collections of revenue. There are no rice villages.

The jāgīr estates.

177. The District has nine jāgīr estates. Two villages of the Bāriām-Pagāra jāgīr of Hoshangābād are within the jurisdiction of Chhindwāra, and 6 villages of the Pachmarhī jāgīr are in the Hoshangābād District. There were originally 13 estates. The jāgīrdār of Harrākot or Raikherī rebelled in 1857 and his estate was confiscated and is now within the Hoshangābād District. At the settlement of 1867 the Chhāter and Bārīām-Pagāra estates and some villages of the Pachmarhī jāgīr were transferred to the Hoshangābād District. The Adegaon estate is now in the Seonī District and lies just to the east of the Chhindwāra estates. The area of the estates is 1597 square miles and they contain 536 villages, of which 80 are uninhabited.

Historical notice.

178. Sir R. Jenkins in his Report of 1826 summed up the history of the jāgīrdārs thus :—
'These Thākurs occupy all the most 'mountainous portion of Deogarh above the ghāts, and 'have always been in a kind of feudal subjection, first to 'the Gond Rājās and since to the Marāthās. The unproduc-'tiveness of the hills and forests, and the natural strength 'of the country preserved these chiefs from entire subjection

'to the Marāthās, who, however, possessed themselves of 'the most accessible parts, and whose policy generally was 'to support one of the most powerful of them to keep the 'others in check, and to be responsible for the depredations 'they were always in the habit of committing on the 'neighbouring plains.

'Of the actual origin of the tenures little evidence is 'available. But a record furnished by the *mukāsdār* of 'Motur ascribes the origin of the Almod and Bhardāgarh 'jāgirs to a grant by the Gond Rājā Jātba Shā as a reward 'for suppressing four hill chiefs, who had harassed the 'territory of Deogarh; and a record held by the Harrai 'family describes the gradual acquisition at various times 'of the lands now forming the Harrai, Sonpur and Partāb-'garh-Pagāra jāgirs, as rewards for similar services, on 'condition of colonising and tranquillising these wild tracts. 'It is possible that no jāgīr dates back earlier than Jātba 'Shā, the founder of the Gond kingdom of Deogarh. The 'tenure was originally a service tenure. The duties were 'to prevent marauding and to keep peace in the hills and to 'support the Rājā of Deogarh with men and personal ser-'vice when required. As a rule no money payment was 'required by the Rājā. When power passed to the Marā-'thā government, it retained the existing conditions with but 'few alterations.' As stated by Sir Richard Jenkins, arbitrary demands were sometimes made, but changes of policy were incidental and small.

The policy adopted after the annexation is described as follows :—'There were, in fact, several considerable fami-'lies among them, each wishing to be considered the head 'of the whole. All had resisted, with more or less success, 'the establishment of one authority...........It seemed 'therefore to be a preferable system to attach those 'amongst them who were of any consequence by direct 'ties to the paramount state, and to strengthen their 'natural influence over their immediate relations and

'dependants, by giving them authority to restrain them, and 'making them responsible for their conduct. On this principle the rights and lands of each of the Thākurs were confirmed to them by *sanad*. All these zamīndārs were 'miserably poor, and under the bad management of the 'Marāthās they had lived almost entirely upon plunder, 'neglecting the cultivation of their own lands, and maintaining bodies of armed men, foreigners as well as Gonds, 'which nothing but plunder could enable them to support. 'To wean them from these habits by leading them to look 'to honest means for their subsistence, it was first necessary to show them that they could no longer prey upon 'their neighbours with impunity, and this impression was 'fully made by the results of our operations in the hills. 'They required funds for their immediate support, as well 'as to form the ground-work of their agricultural labours, but 'these it was requisite to furnish with a sparing hand, for 'fear of inducing too great a reliance on sources of supply 'foreign to their own exertions. Yet it was just and prudent to relieve them from embarrassments which could 'not but be discouraging to them at the outset, and which 'had their origin in previous circumstances, though aggravated considerably by physical evils beyond our or their 'control.'

Transit or pilgrim taxes resumed by the Nāgpur Government formed a source from which various maintenance allowances were granted. Under the supervision of Capt. Montgomery, the Resident's Assistant in charge of Deogarh above the Ghāts, robbery and marauding ceased, and a state of peacefulness began which has lasted to the present day. The jāgīrdārs to whom *sanads* were issued by the Resident were confirmed in possession of their estates for ever, and a nominal sum, either forest produce or a little money, was made payable yearly. The personal attendance of the jāgīrdār with a few men on requisition by the Government was made a condition, and the maintenance of

order within his estate was made compulsory on the jāgirdār. The collection of pilgrim dues, which the jāgirdārs had been realising, was taken over by the Nāgpur Government, and from the proceeds various stipends were granted to jāgirdārs. In the case of the Harrai, Sonpur and Partābgarh-Pagāra estates, which were held by the same family, an extensive redistribution took place in order to provide for all the branches of the family.

179. In 1867 Mr. Ramsay made a summary settlement of the jāgirs, his method being as follows :—In extending to the jāgirs the same formal conferral of proprietary right that had been made in the territory administered direct, he was met by the difficulty that while the jāgirdār was head of the estate, there were certain persons, relatives and others, who held villages on *mukāsa*[1] tenure almost independently of the jāgirdār ; he solved the difficulty by conferring proprietary right on such *mukāsdārs*, subject to their customary payment to the jāgirdār, while the proprietary right in the remaining villages was conferred on the jāgirdār. These proceedings were declared subject to the new settlement, *i.e.*, the final decision of Government. In 1874 proposals for the status of the jāgirs were submitted to the Government of India. They were in the main that the jāgirdārs should be allowed the income from rents and leases, excise, pāndhri, pounds, unclaimed property, sale of timber and minor forest dues ; that they should be allowed and required to keep up their own police ; that their present payments in forest produce or money should be changed to a nominal sum of money slightly higher than the existing sums, in order to assert Government's right to enhance ; that the stipends should gradually be disallowed ; that road, school and dāk cesses should for the present be remitted, and that new *sanads* for a term which should coincide with the District settlement should be granted to the jāgirdārs. These proposals were approved by the Govern-

The Settlement of 1867.

ment of India in 1875. By an oversight the *sanads* were not issued until 1879. Their most remarkable provision was the third clause :—'You are recognised as the sole superior proprietor in your estate, and according to custom the succession will be regulated by the rule of primogeniture. It follows that the ordinary rules of Hindu inheritance do not apply, and that no partition of shares can take place. The estate remains one and undivided, the head of the family for the time being acknowledged as chief.'

180. Mr. Montgomerie had no doubt that Mr. Ramsay's settlement of 1867 was made subject to the provisions of the *sanad* of 1879 and that the *mukāsdārs* to whom Mr. Ramsay gave proprietary rights must be held to be inferior proprietors, the jāgīrdār being superior proprietor. The payments of the jāgīrdārs were fixed in 1874, but no year had been stated in which they should determine, though they were intended to run for the period of the mālguzāri settlement. The year 1897 was therefore selected as the date of their expiry.

The recent settlement.

In 1894 the assets of the jāgīrdārs were ascertained. The Settlement Superintendent with a small staff of Inspectors made out rent-rolls for each village of the jāgīrs, and recorded, in terms of seed sown, the area of the home farm. He also ascertained, from information given by the jāgīrdārs from their accounts and from local enquiry, the income derived from miscellaneous sources. The assets were then divided into two classes, the gross assets and the land-revenue assets. The land-revenue assets consisted of the rental, the valuation of the home farm and the forest income ; and the gross assets included, besides the land-revenue assets, all the miscellaneous items of revenue which these jāgīrdārs collect and mālguzārs do not, such as the income from cattle pounds, bazars, unclaimed property, pāndhri, hides, sales of cattle, payments of the annual mahuā gathering and excise receipts. The object of the

division was to calculate the land-revenue assets in order to the fixing of a standard land-revenue demand, and to calculate the gross income in order to base on it the Government demand which might fairly be taken on it as *takolī*. The land-revenue demand serves to determine the amount of cesses due on the estate.

In 1894 the gross income of the jāgīrdārs was found to be Rs. 96,000, of which Rs. 19,234 were derived from excise. For the purposes of assessment two-thirds of the ascertained income were taken as the net assets. The extent to which the demand from the jāgīrdārs should be raised was the subject of much discussion. Eventually the Government of India approved the fixation of the demand for *takolī* and cesses at Rs. 5500 for all the jāgīrs.[1]

The total demand was thus much greater than the *takolī* of Rs. 210 fixed in 1874, but absorbed only a small part of the total assets. The *kāmil jamā* was Rs. 55,000, on which the cesses payable were Rs. 3728; but of this sum Rs. 1080 were contributed by the inferior proprietors. The *takolī* was fixed at Rs. 3000. The revised payments fell at between 8 and 9 per cent. on the gross assets reduced by 33 per cent. to allow for fluctuations of income.

Resumption of excise and police rights.

181. In 1902 the excise and police jurisdiction of the jāgīrdārs was resumed by Government.[2] A sum of Rs. 500 was deducted from their payments on account of excise *takolī*, and Rs. 589 was added for police *takolī*. A sum of 8 years' purchase of the estimated excise income was paid to the jāgīrdārs as compensation, deducting one-eighth on account of expenses of management. The net profits were estimated at Rs. 16,000, and the compensation was Rs. 1·27 lakhs. At the same time the rights of the jāgīrdārs to the management of their pounds and to unclaimed property were

1 Letter No. 2387-436 of 11th October 1897 from Government of India.

2 Secretariat letter No. 3377, dated 18th July 1907.

resumed, and a payment of Rs. 9000 was made to them as compensation on the same method of calculation. An additional sum of Rs. 9000 was afterwards paid to the jāgīrdār of Pagāra on account of the excise rights which he had purchased from his *mukāsdārs* for this sum, and which had not been included in the original estimate of profits. The Government systems of excise and police administration were introduced into the jāgīrs in 1902. The revised assessments of the jāgīrs took effect from 1899 and will remain in force until the 30th June 1911.

CHAPTER IX.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.[1]

District Subdivisions and Staff.

182. The District of Chhindwāra was formed on the annexation of the Nāgpur State in 1854, and at first belonged to the Nāgpur Division; but on the constitution of the Central Provinces by the union of the new Nāgpur province with the Saugor and Nerbudda territories was transferred to the Nerbudda Division, to which it has since belonged. It is in the jurisdiction of the Divisional Judge of that Division, and is administered by a Deputy Commissioner with two executive Assistants. The District is subdivided into two tahsīls, Chhindwāra and Sausar, each in charge of a tahsīldār, who is assisted by a naib and supervised by one of the executive Assistants. The Assistant in charge of the Chhindwāra tahsīl is also Treasury Officer, and the Deputy Commissioner is District Registrar. There is a bench of Honorary Magistrates at Chhindwāra consisting of five members with 3rd class powers. The civil judicial staff consists of a District Judge, a Subordinate Judge and a munsiff for each tahsīl. During the year 1906, however, a second munsiff was posted to the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and there is sometimes a second Subordinate Judge. Besides these, one of the executive Extra Assistant Commissioners is an additional judge in the court of the Sub-Judge, and both the tahsīldārs act as additional judges in the courts of the munsiffs attached to their respective tahsīls for the trial of tenancy cases. The District usually has a commissioned Medical Officer as Civil Surgeon and Superintendent of the District Jail, and is also a forest division in charge of a Deputy Conservator of Forests. Chhindwāra is a subdivision of the Public Works Department under the Executive Engineer of the Narsinghpur division.

[1] This chapter was drafted by the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Skinner.

Land Record Staff.

183. Under the Marāthā Government there was no organised land record staff. The patwāri, where he existed, was a mere private servant of the patel, and was only recognised by the government as the medium for the preparation of the village accounts and for the submission of all returns that might be called for. His appointment and dismissal and the mode of his remuneration were left to the patel. The cultivators were also required by custom to pay him some grain dues at harvest time. In a very few cases the office of patwāri was hereditary. On the annexation of the District it was attempted to make patwāris into regular servants of Government and to allow them fixed rates of remuneration. But at the 30 years' settlement it was ruled that they should revert to their former position as servants of the patels. Such of the patels as were capable of filing their village papers themselves were exempted from the necessity of maintaining a patwāri. The village papers were written up after superficial enquiry from the villagers without actual field-to-field visitation. This system continued until 1885-86, when the present patwāri system was introduced with the consent of the patels. A staff of 146 patwāris for the *khālsa* portion of the District was entertained. Their graded salaries varied from Rs. 108 to Rs. 150 per annum. A few of them also received personal allowances varying from Rs. 4 to Rs. 38 per annum. A supervising staff of 6 Revenue Inspectors for the whole District, save the jāgīrs, was also appointed. After the last settlement in 1894-95 four new circles were formed—three in the Chhindwāra and one in the Sausar tahsīl. At this time also the opportunity was taken of forming patwāris' circles for the jāgīrs, with the result that 18 patwāris and one Revenue Inspector were appointed for that part of the District. In 1904 the jāgīr circles having been found unmanageable were reduced in size by the creation of 22 new circles of patwāris with a second Revenue Inspector, increasing the number of

patwāris and Revenue Inspectors from 18 and one to 40 and two respectively, and making the total number of patwāris in the District 190 and of Revenue Inspectors 8. Each patwāri has on an average about 10 villages in his circle, and each Inspector some 240 to 250 villages and about 24 patwāris. The patwāris' dues from tenants, at the rate of 4½ pies per rupee of rental, now amounted to Rs. 9700 per annum, while their salaries from Government came to Rs. 13,500. When the patwāri cess was abolished on 1st April 1906, and the tenants were relieved of the payment of dues, the total consolidated salaries from Government were raised to Rs. 23,000 per annum. Among the patwāris there are 49 Marāthā Brāhmans, 26 Upper India Brāhmans, 49 Muhammadans and 14 Kāyasths. The work of the Revenue Inspectors and patwāris is supervised and inspected by a Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Land Records. In view of the class of men that have to be employed and the salaries drawn by them, the patwāris work is, on the whole, distinctly well done.

Litigation and Crime.

184. The record of crime of the District is not heavy. During the ten years ending 1904 the average number of persons convicted for offences affecting human life was 12, for robbery and dacoity 4, and for grievous hurt 4. The figures for house-breaking and theft were affected by the famines, but during the years 1901—05 they averaged 172. The average annual number of criminal cases disposed of during the years 1895—1904 was 1023 and in 1905, 1177. The average figures for cognizable and non-cognizable cases during 1895—1904 were 575 and 397. The average annual institutions of civil suits during the period 1891—1900 were 3073. The institutions during the last 6 years have been continually on the increase, the figures having risen from 2967 in 1901 to about 4000 during the year 1906. The nature of the litigation is generally simple, and it consists mostly of petty suits below Rs. 50 in value. The

number of suits between landlords and tenants has been decreasing of late, and those for recovery of immoveable property and for enforcement of mortgage contracts have been increasing. A very large fraction of the suits for recovery of immovable property relate to encroachments on village waste or *banjar* lands by neighbouring tenants.

Registration.

185. The Deputy Commissioner is now District Registrar and there are three sub-registration offices, one at Chhindwāra for the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and two at Sausar and Pāndhurnā, dividing the Sausar tahsil. The number of documents registered has been about 1500 annually, and the net receipts of the department Rs. 3000 during the last few years.

Statistics of revenue.

186. The following statement shows the receipts under the principal heads of revenue in past years and from 1903 to 1906:—

Year.	Land Revenue.	Cesses.	Stamps.	Excise.	Forests.	Registration.	Income-tax.	Other Receipts.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1880-81	2,06,000	15,000	38,000	67,000	27,000	3,000	...	14,000	3,70,000
1890-91	2,09,000	26,000	49,000	1,25,000	53,000	5,000	8,000	16,000	4,91,000
1900-01	3,73,000	45,000	49,000	98,000	56,000	4,000	10,000	10,000	6,45,000
1903-04	2,97,000	43,000	77,000	1,68,000	69,000	5,000	9,000	12,000	6,80,000
1904-05	3,03,000	42,000	76,000	2,46,000	77,000	7,000	9,000	9,000	7,69,000
1905-06	3,08,000	38,000	77,000	2,65,000	98,000	6,000	9,000	17,000	8,18,000

Excise. Country liquor.

187. Up to 1896-97 the excise system consisted of a contract still and outstills, the contract still being abolished in that year and a sadar or central distillery with a still-head duty on mahuā of 1½ annas per seer substituted for it. In 1905-06 the whole of the Sausar tahsīl, excepting the Khamārpāni tract which is still under the outstill system, was brought under the contract supply system. In the following year the contract supply system was extended to the old sadar distillery area of the Chhindwāra tahsil and the adjacent outstills. It is likely to be further extended in the coming financial year. Formerly the jāgīrdārs received the excise income of the jāgirs, but this

privilege was withdrawn from them with effect from the 1st April 1902. In 1906-07 the contract for the manufacture of liquor in the Sausar tahsīl was given to a well-known European company, Messrs. Parry & Company of Madras and that for the Chhindwāra tahsīl to another European company, Messrs. Carew & Company of Shāhjahānpur, the cost and duty at the Sausar warehouse being Rs. 3-2-0 and R. 0-15-0 per proof gallon respectively. Liquor for issue is of three strengths—25°, 42° and 60° u.p., but the last-mentioned is the one for which there is most demand. The revenue under country spirit rose from Rs. 75,000 odd in 1894-95 to Rs. 1,95,000 odd in 1905-06, which is the highest figure yet reached, and seventh in the whole Province. The incidence of the total excise revenue in 1905-06 was 7 annas 8 pies per head of population as against the Provincial figure of 4 annas 8 pies. The total number of liquor shops has been reduced from 454 to 319 and further reductions are contemplated, while the number of outstills has been reduced from 64 to 40. One shop on the average serves 14 square miles or 1278 persons. No *tāri* contract has hitherto been in force in the District, but a few groves of toddy palms exist in the Sausar tahsīl and it is in contemplation to lease them for working next year.

Opium and gānja.

188. The revenue from opium in 1905-06 was Rs. 53,000, the highest figure yet reached. The incidence of income per head of population is 2 annas as against a Provincial figure of 1 anna and 9 pies. In 1905-06 there were 62 licensed opium shops, which have since been reduced to 41. There is one shop for 113 square miles or 9949 persons. Up to 1902 the jāgīrdārs were supplied with opium at Rs. 14 per seer, but were bound to sell it to their contractors at Rs. 22 per seer. The revenue from *gānja* (which is imported from

Khandwā by wholesale vendors and sold to the public by licensed retail vendors) has risen from Rs. 9000 in 1894-95 to Rs. 16,000 in 1905-06, the highest figure yet recorded. The incidence of income per head of population is 7 pies as against the Provincial average of 5 pies. The number of shops has been reduced from 63 to 43, or one for 107 square miles and 9500 persons. The shop in Chhindwāra town is licensed to sell *bhāng* and *charas*, but the consumption of these drugs is insignificant.

District Council and Local Boards.

189. The Local Self Government Act, I of 1883, was brought into force in this District on the 1st April 1884 and the management of rural schools, cattle pounds, *sarais*, and minor roads with the ferries on them was entrusted to a District Council, which is composed of 17 members, 13 elected and 4 nominated. One of the Deputy Commissioner's Assistants has always been the President of the District Council. Rai Sāhib Mathurā Prasād has been Secretary of the Council since 1895 and has rendered valuable service in that capacity. The net income of the District Council during the year 1905-06 amounted to Rs. 25,000 and it received a Government contribution of Rs. 22,000 for general purposes. Out of Rs. 25,000, Rs. 17,000 were realised from the road and education cesses, while the balance included Rs. 7000 on account of cattle pound receipts. The total net expenditure of the Council for the same year was Rs. 47,500, out of which Rs. 22,000 were spent on education, Rs. 6400 on medical services (including Rs. 2400 for village sanitation charges) and Rs. 11,000 on civil works. There are 59 schools, 37 cattle pounds, 7 ferries, 4 *sarais* and 6 surface roads under the control of the District Council. The cattle pounds are now in charge of schoolmasters. Under the District Council are three Local Boards, including one for the Chhindwāra tahsil jāgīrs. The tahsīldār and naib-tahsīldār are respectively President and Secretary of the Chhindwāra and

Sausar Local Boards, while the Deputy Commissioner and the tahsīldār of Chhindwāra are President and Secretary of the jāgīr Local Board. The jāgīr Local Board comprises all the jāgīrdārs whose estates are not under the Court of Wards, and the Manager of the Court of Wards as representative of the estates administered by it. This Board was constituted in 1902.

190. The District contains three municipalities—Chhindwāra, Sausar and Pāndhurnā. Lodhīkherā and Mohgaon were formerly municipal towns, but are so no longer. Chhindwāra was created a municipality in 1867. It has an area of 738 acres with 2393 inhabited houses and a population of 9736. The committee consists of 10 elected and 4 nominated members. The average income of the municipality during the decade ending 1901 was Rs. 13,000, octroi and conservancy cess being the principal sources of income. The income for the year 1905-06 was Rs. 23,000. The incidence of the income, excluding the Government contribution, was Rs. 2-2-6. The expenditure in the same year was Rs. 22,000 and included Rs. 4000 as a contribution towards a town hall. The Sausar municipality was created in 1867. It has an area of 105 acres with 1002 inhabited houses and a population of 4785. There are 6 elected and 2 nominated members. The average municipal receipts for the decade ending 1901 were Rs. 1700 and in 1905-06 Rs. 3000. A *haisiyat* or property tax is the chief source of income. The Pāndhurnā municipality was also created in 1867. It has an area of 117 acres with 1861 inhabited houses and a population of 8904. The committee consists of 8 members, of whom 6 are elected and 2 nominated. The average municipal receipts for the decade ending 1901 were Rs. 3000 and in 1905-06 Rs. 5000. A property tax has recently been introduced in lieu of a house-tax and an increase in the income is anticipated.

Municipalities.

191. The Village Sanitation Act is in force in Lodhikherā and Mohgaon, having been introduced when the municipal constitution of these towns was abolished. During the years 1903-05 the average income of the Lodhīkherā committee was Rs. 2600 and that of Mohgaon Rs. 1700. The receipts are obtained from a house-tax on the residents and are expended on the conservancy and water-supply of the villages. The Mukaddam rules are enforced in the village of Umreth and a sum of about Rs. 200 is raised annually for sanitary purposes. Between 1899 and 1906 Rs. 6000 were expended from District funds on the construction of 14 new wells and the repair of 25 existing ones. About Rs. 2500 have been laid out from Government funds in the construction of 8 new wells in ryotwāri villages.

Village Sanitation.

192. The total value of the Provincial civil buildings borne on the books of the Public Works Department is about Rs. 3 lakhs and their maintenance charges amount to Rs. 7800 per annum. The principal buildings are :—the District court-house in two separate blocks erected in 1821 at a cost of Rs. 56,200 ; the church at Chhindwāra erected in the same year at a cost of Rs. 12,900 ; the cemetery enclosed in 1854 at a cost of Rs. 3900 ; the tahsīl buildings at Chhindwāra and Sausar erected in 1865 at a cost of Rs. 6500 and 7000 respectively ; the District jail, an old building of the native government which with subsequent enlargements represents a total capital cost of Rs. 87,000 ; the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow purchased in 1888-89 for Rs. 6000 ; the circuit house constructed in 1903 at a cost of Rs. 8100 ; and the police lines costing Rs. 33,600.

Public Works.

193. The sanctioned strength of the police force in 1905 was 323 officers and men. This figure included a District Superintendent of Police, 2 Inspectors, 6 Sub-Inspectors, 49 head-constables, and 265 constables, of whom 3 were mounted. There

Police.

was no Railway police. The ordinary reserve consists of 8 head-constables and 65 constables. The proportion of police engaged in the prevention and detection of crime in 1905 was one to every 14 square miles and 1263 persons. The cost of the police in this year was Rs. 57,000. About half of the men are enlisted from the District and the other half from other Districts of the Province and from Upper India. In 1905 the force contained 69 Brāhmans, 88 Muhammadans, 23 Rājputs and 13 Marāthās. Of the officers 14 were Brāhmans and 25 Muhammadans. The District contains 8 Station-houses and 19 outposts. The Station-houses are located at Chhindwāra, Umreth, Chhindī, Amarwāra and Chaurai in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and Sausar, Bichhua, and Pāndhurnā in the Sausar tahsīl. The jāgīrdārs had their own police till 1st April 1902, when the jāgīr area was brought under regular District administration.

Kotwārs.

194. Prior to the 30 years' settlement kotwārs were as much Government as mere village servants, but it was then decided that they should be merely the servants of the proprietors, and that the latter would be held responsible for the due reporting of crime. In addition to his ordinary duties the kotwār was the referee in many cases of dispute, and the custodian of village boundaries. At the last land-revenue settlement of the District the arrangements for maintaining kotwārs were revised and cash payments substituted for grain dues as far as possible. Grain payments are, however, retained in the Khamārpāni and Ambāra groups of Sausar, and the Umreth and Aser groups of Chhindwāra and in other poor villages, where the remuneration in cash would have been insufficient for the kotwār. The revised arrangements necessitated the reduction of the number of kotwārs by 70, not wholly owing to amalgamation of villages, but partly to the reduction of an unnecessarily large staff in certain large villages. The grain dues were taken at three *kuros* of grain per plough, worth 12 to 14

annas. There are in all 1336 kotwārs in the *khālsa* villages, 868 in the Chhindwāra tahsīl and 468 in the Sausar tahsīl. Of these, 756 are remunerated by cash payments, whilst 580 receive their dues in kind. The total estimated remuneration amounts to Rs. 42,000 or an average of nearly Rs. 32 per annum per kotwār. In addition to this the kotwārs usually receive the hides of cattle dying within the village boundaries, although under the record of rights the owners of cattle are given the option of taking them. A good many kotwārs hold some mahuā trees as a recognised part of their remuneration, and where there is a bazar the kotwārs usually receive bazar dues (known as *ughai*) and their doing so was not interfered with by the Settlement Officer. The amounts of such dues have never, however, been fixed by authority, nor are they legally recoverable. In the Sausar tahsīl the kotwārs are all Mehrās by caste, but in the Chhindwāra tahsīl there are also Pardhāns and Katias. Service by different members of a family in rotation has been discouraged. The arrangements as to kotwārs in the jāgīrs were for the first time formally recorded in 1904 and 326 kotwārs have been recognised for the whole jāgīr area of 530 villages. Kotwārs in the jāgīrs are appointed by the Deputy Commissioner on the nomination of the jāgīrdār concerned.

Jail.

195. Chhindwāra has a fourth-class District jail with accommodation for 92 male and 3 female prisoners, exclusive of hospital, and solitary cells, under the management of the Civil Surgeon. The subordinate staff consists of a jailor, an assistant jailor, and 14 warders including head-warders. The daily average number of prisoners has steadily fallen during the last four years, having been as follows :— *1902*, 70; *1903*, 66; *1904*, 52; *1905*, 40. The average cost of maintenance per head has increased from Rs. 68 in 1902 to Rs. 140 in 1905, partly owing to the decrease in numbers. The manufacture of aloe fibre is the staple industry of the

jail, which will not improbably be shortly reduced to the level of a subsidiary jail.

Education.

196. The recent progress of education in the Chhindwāra District is shown by the following statistics:—

Year.	No. of Schools.	Scholars.
1880-81	36	1749
1890-91	37	2181
1900-01	57	3094
1904-05	72	5195
1905-06	80	5720

The highest education given in the District is up to the middle school standard; there are two English schools at Chhindwāra, a municipal school with 149 scholars, and one aided Mission school with 58 scholars. There are 5 vernacular middle schools at Sausar, Pāndhurnā, Mohgaon, Lodhīkherā and Mohkher, of which 3 have training classes attached to them for preparing candidates for the teachers' certificate examination. The number of primary schools is 73 with 4702 scholars. Seven aided schools containing 237 scholars are maintained by the Swedish Mission and two unaided schools by private persons. The District has only 5 girls' schools, three at Chhindwāra, one at Umreth, and one at Chaurai, with a total of 167 scholars. Of these four are supported by the Swedish Mission aided by a Government grant and one is a purely Government institution started at Chhindwāra in October 1905. The percentage of the total number of scholars including girls to those of school-going age is 9·3, and of boys only, 18·5. At the census of 1901 the District stood tenth in respect of the literacy of its population, 45 per thousand males being able to read and write. Only 214 females were returned as literate. Among the Muhammadans, the proportion of male literates was 156 per thousand. The expenditure on education increased from Rs. 12,000 in 1891-92 to Rs. 26,000

in 1902-03, Rs. 32,000 in 1904-05 and 39,000 in 1905-06. In the year 1905-06 Rs. 20,000 were contributed to this purpose from Provincial funds, Rs. 8000 from local funds, Rs. 3000 from municipal funds and Rs. 7500 from other sources. The District is under the Inspector of Schools, Nerbudda Circle, and has one Deputy Inspector of Schools. Chhindwāra has a printing press, using Hindī and English type.

Dispensaries.

197. The District has five dispensaries including a main dispensary and police hospital at Chhindwāra, branch dispensaries at Sausar and Pāndhurnā and a mission dispensary at Amarwāra. The Chhindwāra dispensary has accommodation for 16 inpatients and those of Sausar and Pāndhurnā for three and two, respectively. The mission dispensary at Amarwāra has four beds. In 1905, 242 indoor patients and 23,172 outdoor patients were treated at these dispensaries, the daily average number of in and outdoor patients being 9 and 188 respectively. The average income of the public dispensaries during the decade ending 1901 from Provincial and local funds and public subscriptions was Rs. 5000 and in 1905 Rs. 12,000. The latter figure includes Rs. 5600 on account of the Pāndhurnā dispensary, the greater part of which was collected for the dispensary building. This is still under construction, the dispensary having been opened in temporary quarters in 1905. The dispensary will bear the name of Seth Narāyan Dās, who contributed Rs. 4000 towards it. The building for the Victoria Hospital or main dispensary at Chhindwāra was erected in 1903 at a cost of Rs. 18,000, of which Rs. 6000 were received from the Victoria Memorial fund, in addition to Rs. 2000 for instruments.

Vaccination.

198. Vaccination is only compulsory in the municipal towns of Chhindwāra, Sausar, and Pāndhurnā and the some time municipalities of Lodhīkherā and Mohgaon, but is carried on

throughout the District in the open season. The staff consists of a native Superintendent and 10 vaccinators. The cost of the operations in 1905-06 was Rs. 2200. The number of successful primary vaccinations in 1890-91 was 12,000 or 33 per thousand of population; in 1900-01, 10,000 or 24 per thousand; and in 1905-06, 16,000 or 39 per thousand, the highest figure yet attained. The number of secondary vaccinations in this year was 517. It was formerly very much higher, but the vaccinator had been in the habit of re-vaccinating every mother who brought her child to be vaccinated and this practice had to be checked.

Veterinary dispensary.

199. A veterinary dispensary was opened at Chhindwāra in April 1905. It is maintained by the District Council with a contribution of Rs. 300 per annum from the Chhindwāra municipality. No charge is made for the treatment of animals. During the first year 201 animals were treated and the total expenditure incurred amounted to Rs. 1000. Since 1906 a second veterinary assistant has been attached to the dispensary for touring purposes.

APPENDIX.

GAZETTEER OF TAHSILS, JAGIRS, TOWNS, IMPORTANT VILLAGES, RIVERS AND HILLS.

APPENDIX.

GAZETTEER OF TAHSILS, JAGIRS, TOWNS, IMPORTANT VILLAGES, RIVERS AND HILLS.

Almod Jagir.—A jāgīr lying in the valley to the south of the Mahādeo range and extending to the hills south of this. Though lying in the valley the surface is much broken up by small hills, and the country is of a rugged description. The area is 89 square miles and the jāgīr contains 29 villages, of which 3 are uninhabited. Almod gives its name to a geological group of the Gondwāna system of rocks, consisting of sandstones with a few carbonaceous shales. The jāgīrdār's residence is a few miles outside the estate at his *mukāsa* village Jāmundhungā in the open lands of Partābgarh-Pagāra. The Almod and Bhardāgarh jāgīrs were once united. One family tradition states that an ancestor of the family broke up a combination of hill chiefs who were hostile to the Rājā of Deogarh; he sent his son, who worked for one of the chiefs and proposed for the hand of his daughter. But at the meeting which was arranged for the betrothal, the hill chief's party was attacked and overcome, and the others became so demoralised that their force was soon broken up. As a reward for his services this ancestor was given a jāgīr of 92 villages, and at his death these were divided into the Almod, Bhardāgarh and Bhāndi-Motur jāgīrs, of which the two first remain. The present jāgīrdār is Ajmer Shā and he is about 30 years old. The family is connected by marriage with that of Partābgarh-Pagāra, in which estate the jāgīrdār of Almod has two villages. The population of the jāgīr in 1901 was 3000 persons and has declined very slightly in the last twenty years. Of the total area only 6000 acres or 25 per cent. are occupied for cultivation and of the remainder 9000 are recorded as tree-forest. The principal crops are kodon-kutki and the pulses urad

and mūng. The villages are generally hilly and the soil is poor, but the estate has valuable timber forests. Twelve villages of the jāgīr are held *mukāsa* or free of revenue, most of these having been allotted for the maintenance of the relatives of the family. Four villages of the Almod jāgīr lie in the Hoshangābād District. Two annual fairs are held at Nāgadwāri, a village of the estate, in the months of Shrāwan (July-August) and Baisākh (May-June) and the jāgīrdār was in the habit of levying a cess from the pilgrims who attended these. This tax was abolished in 1874 and a stipend of Rs. 170 annually as compensation was paid to the jāgīrdār, a half of which or Rs. 85-7-6 is continued to his successor. The voluntary offerings of the pilgrims are still however an important source of income to the estate. The *takolī* payable to Government was fixed at Rs. 125 at last settlement, the income of the estate being then estimated at Rs. 3000 annually. In 1905-06 the income was Rs. 5000. The estate has been under the management of the Court of Wards since 1903 on account of debt. A consolidated loan of Rs. 20,000 was taken to pay off the claims of the jāgīrdār's creditors and this has been reduced to Rs. 17,000. There is a police outpost at Gof.

Bariam-Pagara Jagir.—A jāgīr of the Hoshangābād District of which two villages lie in Chhindwāra.

Batkagarh Jagir.—This jāgīr adjoins the Narsinghpur District to the north and the Sonpur jāgīr to the south. Its area is 275 square miles. The country is very hilly and consists of the rugged broken ground, extending from the hill-range which forms the base of the jāgīrs, to the northern edge of the Sātpurā plateau abutting on the Nerbudda valley. From the nature of the country the soil is poor and the cultivation consists chiefly of rain crops. This is a favourite locality for *dahia* or patch cultivation. The jāgīrdār lives at

that 'From his relationship to the Gond Rājā he was always in attendance on the Marāthā Sūbahdārs of the Province. His duties were continued, and it was requisite, besides confirming his lands to him to provide some additional allowances for him.' Kesho Rao died in 1831 and was succeeded by his cousin Bakhat Singh. Bakhat Singh assisted in putting down Tantia Topī in 1858-59 and his services were acknowledged by Government. His son Gopāl Singh succeeded in 1862-63 and was succeeded by his son Bipat Shā, the present jāgīrdār, in 1906. Bipat Shā is about 20 years old. The family is said to have come from Gannorgarh in Bhopāl territory and judging from its genealogy probably immigrated to Chhindwāra in the seventeenth century. In 1901 the population was 6804, having decreased by 34 per cent. during the previous decade. The density is only 25 persons per square mile. The jāgīr contains 98 villages, of which 22 are uninhabited. Of the total area 30,000 acres or 27 per cent. are occupied for cultivation, the cropped area being 19,000 acres. Nearly half the whole surface of the jāgīr is covered by tree-forest, and the income is largely derived from the forests, which contain valuable teak, *sāj* and *shīsham* (*Dalbergia latifolia*) timber. The jāgīr is linked to the Chhindwāra-Narsinghpur road by a good fair-weather road from Khāpa to Harrai. Of the whole estate 16 villages are held on *mukāsa* or revenue-free tenure, having been allotted for the dowry of female relatives, for service, and as religious grants. The jāgīrdār receives the income from grazing and from the sale proceeds of timber from these villages. The *takolī* was fixed at Rs. 30 in 1874, and was raised to Rs. 494 at last settlement. The jāgīrdār receives no stipend from Government. At settlement the income of the estate was found to be nearly Rs. 16,000, which has been [illegible] to Rs. 13,000 by resumption of the excise revenue.

under Court of Wards management in 1905 owing to the incapacity of the present jāgīrdār's brother Prān Shā. The liabilities were ascertained at Rs. 21,000. A primary school at Khāpa is maintained by the District Council, and a post office and police outpost are also located here. Khāpa is 44 miles from Chhindwāra.

Bel River.—A river which rises in the Betūl District and flowing to the east forms for some distance the boundary between Chhindwāra and Betūl, subsequently passing into Chhindwāra to join the Kanhān. Its name is probably derived from *bel* a creeper, and symbolises its winding course.

Berdi.—A village in the Sausar tahsīl about two miles from Sausar with a population of about 2700 persons. A number of moneylenders reside in Berdī and a large market is held here on Fridays during the open season. About 1000 head of cattle are brought for sale weekly. *Gonās* or bags of coarse cotton cloth for carrying grain are also sold and *tādus* or carpets made of pieces of the same cloth sewn together. After carrying their grain the cultivators wear their *gonā* as an overcoat during the cold weather. The village has a primary school and a branch post office. A small sum is raised for purposes of sanitation under Section 145 A of the Land Revenue Act. It is held on quit-rent by the Chitnavīs family.

Bhardagarh Jagir.—The most westerly of the jāgīrs, lying along the ridge to the south of the Mahādeo range and adjoining the Betūl District. Its total area is 120 square miles. The Kanhān river rises in this jāgīr. A *sanad* for the estate was granted to the ancestor of the present proprietor in 1820, but at the settlement of 1867 proprietary right was granted in equal shares to his two grandsons Bakhat Shā and Lubhān Shā. Subsequently in 1879 Ajab Shā, son of Bakhat Shā, was recognised as jāgīrdār of the whole estate. In view of the *sanad* declaring the elder branch as sole proprietors, an allotment of

⅝ths of the forest revenue from the villages held by the other branch was made to him by agreement in the family and the forests are managed jointly. Fourteen villages of the proper jāgīrdār's share are held by his relatives, and in these the jāgīrdār receives ⅝ths of the forest revenue, excluding *harrā*, mahuā and *chironjī* which are enjoyed by the *mukāsdārs*. They have been assessed with *takolī* payable to the jāgīrdār. The present jāgīrdār, Holkar Shā, is the son of Ajab Shā. He lives at Tekādhāna or Pānjra (population 309), and is a shrewd man of business. He is about 36 years old. He lives simply and lends money to his cultivators in order to prevent professional moneylenders from getting a footing in the estate. The population in 1901 was 2756, having increased by 13 per cent. during the previous decade. The density is only 23 persons per square mile and the jāgīr has 40 villages, of which 5 are uninhabited. Of the total area only 7500 acres or a sixth are occupied for cultivation and more than half the surface of the estate is covered by tree-forest. Only 3000 acres are under crop, the principal crops being kodon-kutkī and gram. Although the forests contain a considerable quantity of teak, it is little worked at present. The surface road from Chhindwāra to Betūl passes through the jāgīr. Tekādhāna is 60 miles from Chhindwāra. In 1895 the income was found to be Rs. 5000, but of this sum nearly Rs. 2000 were derived from excise, which has since been resumed. In 1905-06 the receipts were Rs. 3400. The bulk of the receipts are derived from the forests. The *takolī* fixed at last settlement was Rs. 178. A stipend was granted to the jāgīrdār as commutation for a tax on pilgrims and in 1874 it was ruled that Rs. 85 should be paid to the then incumbent and a half to his successors. The present jāgīrdār receives Rs. 21 only, as a quarter of this sum, the other quarter going to the shareholders.

Chawalpani.—A village in the Pagāra jāgīr of the Chhindwāra tahsil, about 64 miles from Chhindwāra. The village

contains two hot and cold sulphur springs. There is a temple of Mahādeo and a small fair is held annually in Kārtik. The village has a primary school for boys, a police outpost and a branch post office.

Chhindwara Tahsil[1]—The northern tahsīl of the District, lying between 21° 46′ and 22° 49′ N. and 78° 10′ and 79° 24′ E. The tahsīl consists of an upland plateau broken by small hills which forms the mālguzāri tract or that held on ordinary proprietary tenure, and of a mass of higher hill and forest country forming the estates of nine jāgīrdārs[2] or hereditary chieftains. The area of the tahsīl is 3528 square miles or 76 per cent. of that of the District. The jāgīrs cover 1597 square miles or 45 per cent. of the tahsīl area. To the south a somewhat arbitrary line running along the top of the *ghāts* or passes of the Sātpurās separates Chhindwāra from the Sausar tahsīl. The east of the *khālsa* area consists of a black-soil wheat plain running north and south from the Seonī-Chhindwāra road. In the centre a sandy plain stretches round Chhindwāra and to the west the country is poor and hilly. The boundary between the jāgirs and the *khālsa* area forms nearly a straight line running from east to west with a slight trend to the south. The jāgīr estates include a tract about 75 miles long and on the average about 30 miles broad, lying more or less parallel to the Nerbudda valley which bounds them to the north. The southern base and most prominent feature of the area is a solid range of hills about 8 miles broad and more than 3000 feet high, running along its whole length. The central and northern parts are less uniform. On the east, the southern range extends northwards, by a broken mass of hills at

Description.

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1 The descriptive section above is taken from Mr. Montgomerie's Tahsīl Report.

2 There are nine estates, of which nearly the whole area is included in the District, and also a small part of Bāriām-Pagāra, the bulk of which belongs to Hoshangābād.

a lower level, to the ridges which form the boundary between the Nerbudda valley and the Sātpurā plateau. The north-west is occupied by the Pachmarhī plateau, now in the Hoshangābād District, which is of the same elevation as the northern ridge, and is divided from it by a deep valley. This depression, checked by one cross range of hills, curves northwards through the centre of the tract, and curls right round to the north of the Pachmarhī plateau. The Denwā river comes with it from south to north, and only ridges of hill divide the tract on the north from the Nerbudda valley. The jāgīr area may thus be described as an oblong block of hill cut through on the north-west by a valley of horse-shoe shape.

Population.

The population of the tahsil was 286,779 persons in 1901 as against 287,043 in 1891 and 262,090 in 1881. The increase between 1881 and 1891 was 9·4 per cent., while during the last decade the population declined by 0·1 per cent. The decline however was confined to the jāgīrs, which lost by nearly 12 per cent., while in the *khālsa* the population increased by $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Immigration from the jāgīrdāri into the *khālsa* area in 1897 probably contributed to this result. In 1901 the density of population was 81 persons per square mile, being 117 for the mālguzāri and 38 for the jāgīr area. The mālguzāri tract is slightly more populous than Sausar. The tahsīl has one town, Chhindwāra, and 1508 villages according to the village lists, of which 123 are uninhabited. The jāgīrs contain 556 villages. In 1901 only one village, Mohkher (2160), had a population of more than 2000 persons and sixteen villages had more than 1000 persons. Lodhīs, Kurmīs and Raghuvansīs are the most important cultivating castes, while Gonds and Ahīrs are the most numerous. The Bhoyars are reputed the best cultivators in the District. Many Kalārs have now also taken to agriculture. The Telis trade in forest and field produce and cultivate through their servants. Kāyasths reside chiefly in the eastern

part of the tahsīl where they own a number of villages. Their relations with their tenants are not always happy.

Agriculture.

In the mālguzāri area good black soil covers about a quarter of the cultivated acreage and the moderate soil *morand* II a fifth. The remainder consists of inferior soils. In the jāgīrs the land is generally very light and sandy, but small blocks of good soil occur in the Denwā valley and on the Harrai plateau. Of the mālguzāri area 382 square miles or 20 per cent. of the total are occupied by Government forest and another 304 square miles or 16 per cent. by tree-forest or scrub jungle and grass in private hands. In the jāgīrs the forest area is 654 square miles or 41 per cent. of the total. A proportion of 68 per cent. of the mālguzāri village area was occupied for cultivation in 1905-06 as against 60 per cent. at settlement. In the jāgīrs the proportion of occupied area was 23 per cent. The total cultivated area of the tahsīl in 1905-06 was 824,000 acres, including 197,000 acres in the jāgīrs. The settlement statistics of cropping do not include the jāgīrs. The net cropped area of the *khālsa* was 472,000 acres at settlement and in 1905-06 had increased to nearly 541,000 acres or by 15 per cent. The statistics of cropping during the last five years for the tahsīl as a whole are shown on the following page.

Spring crops are grown almost solely on the level Chaurai plateau to the east. The area under cotton increased from 3000 acres at settlement to 24,000 in 1905-06. The acreage of sugarcane on the other hand declined from 3100 to 1400 acres during the same period, while at the 30 years' settlement more than 5000 acres were grown with this valuable crop. The cropping is much more varied than in Sausar, Chhindwāra having nearly the whole of the wheat and kodon-kutkī grown in the District besides a fair proportion of juār and a little cotton. In 1905-06 second crops were grown on 8000 acres, and 6400 acres were irrigated from wells in the crystalline soil.

Year.	Juār.	Wheat.	Gram.	Kodon-kutkī.	Rice.	Til.	Jagnī.	Arhar.	Cotton.	Sugar-cane.	Total cropped area (includes double cropped area).
1901-02	87,342	157,863	55,730	126,579	8,625	17,153	66,354	7,734	4,294	2,133	613,340
1902-03	92,086	156,730	58,608	131,892	9,283	24,447	68,501	8,836	6,104	2,387	645,450
1903-04	81,129	183,502	62,734	121,987	8,469	22,092	81,250	6.696	11,959	1,480	661,180
1904-05	87,148	185,526	56,232	133,671	9,434	24,498	73,428	6,543	23,002	1,425	684,591
1905-06	88,200	189,210	57,034	125,966	7,091	20,015	84,502	6,727	23,978	1,442	688,514
Percentage of area under each crop on the total cropped area in 1905-06.	13	27	8	18	1	3	12	1	3	...	......

Land revenue.

The demand for land revenue in the *khālsa* area at the 30 years' settlement was Rs. 1·16 lakhs and fell at 62 per cent. of the total assets. It was raised at the recent settlement to Rs. 1·73 lakhs, giving an increase of Rs. 55,000 or 47 per cent. on the revenue immediately prior to revision. The revised revenue fell at 53 per cent. of the assets, which amounted to Rs. 3·28 lakhs, the cash rental being Rs. 2·36 lakhs. The demand for cesses was Rs. 26,000 in 1904-05, but the abolition of the patwāri cess and the Additional Rate has reduced this figure to Rs. 11,000. The tahsīl has 59 ryotwāri villages, paying a revenue of Rs. 2746. The jāgīr estates were not regularly settled, but the *takolī* payable by them was fixed at Rs. 6817 including Rs. 3728 on account of cesses. At the 30 years' settlement the tahsīl was divided into the following six parganas for assessment purposes :—Chhindwāra, Mohkher, Chaurai, Amarwāra, Umreth and Aser. At last settlement the assessment groups were formed by subdivision of the parganas with slight modifications in the following manner. The Chaurai pargana was split into the Chaurai group (67 villages) to the north and the Samaswāra group (64) to the south; the Amarwāra pargana into the Amarwāra group (79) to the north and the Singorī group (57) to the south; the Chhindwāra pargana became the Chhindwāra group with 124 villages; the Mohkher pargana was divided into Chānd (74) on the east and Mohkher (100) on the west; the Umreth pargana included the Khursān group (29) in the extreme north, the Dalkā group (54) also to the north, and the Umreth group (158) in the centre and south; while the Aser pargana became the Aser group of 115 villages. The average rent-rate per acre for the mālguzāri area was R. 0-8-6 as against R. 0-12-2 in Sausar. The revenue rate was R. 0-5-0. The most highly assessed groups were Chānd and Chaurai with rent-rates of R. 0-12-7 and R. 0-12-1 respectively. In Mohkher, Chhindwāra and Samaswāra the rate was more than

8 annas an acre and in the remaining groups less than 8 annas.

Miscellaneous.

The tahsil is divided into four Revenue Inspectors' circles with headquarters at Lingā, Umreth, Amarwāra and Chaurai, and into 101 patwāris' circles. It has four police station-houses with headquarters at Chhindwāra, Chaurai, Amarwāra and Umreth and 11 outposts.

Chhindwāra Town.

Chhindwara Town.—The headquarters town of the District, situated in 22° 4′ N. and 78° 57′ E. on the Bodrī stream, which is an affluent of the Kulbehrā. Chhindwāra is 80 miles from Nāgpur by road and 82 miles from Piparia on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. A branch narrow-gauge line of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway from Neinpur junction was opened in 1905, and Chhindwāra is 162 miles by rail from Gondia, 243 miles from Nāgpur and 763 miles from Bombay. The town stands on the open Sātpurā plateau at an elevation of 2200 feet, and is surrounded by a fertile tract of cultivated land, interspersed with mango groves and flanked by ranges of low hills. The soil is a light gravel, drying quickly, and with a comparatively light rainfall the climate is markedly salubrious and pleasant. The name is derived from the *chhind* or date-palm tree. The population was 9736 persons in 1901, 8973 in 1891 and 8220 in 1881. In 1901 the population included 2856 Muhammadans, 239 Jains and 380 Christians. Chhindwāra is said to have been founded by one Ratan Raghuvansi who came from Ajodhyā, the modern Faizābād, and killed the Gaolī chief who owned the tract. He then let loose a goat and on the place where it lay down, built a house, burying the goat alive beneath the foundations. A platform has been erected on the spot where the goat is supposed to have been buried, and it is worshipped as the tutelary deity of the town. The town contains the ruins of a mud fort and inside it is an old stone

house which is supposed to have been that of Ratan Raghuvansī. A military force was quartered at Chhindwāra previous to the Mutiny, and it was used for a short period as a sanitarium for the Kamptee garrison. The town is traversed by the Nāgpur road separating the civil station on the west from the native town on the east. The civil station extends for a distance of nearly two miles and is in parts well-wooded. Another main road traverses the town leading from the District office to the railway station. A circular road also runs round it passing by the hill of Dharamtekrī. The Lālbāg and Ashburner tanks have each an area of about 15 acres, the latter bearing the name of the Deputy Commissioner, Captain Ashburner, under whose supervision the stone embankments and flights of steps were constructed in 1867. Near the tank to the east is a mango-grove containing some Hindu temples and a small well, which gives an unfailing supply of water when others run dry. To the east by the railway station runs the Chauhāri stream, and by this is a well and a temple of Mahādeo below the level of the ground. A small religious gathering is held here on the day after the Polā festival. In the Golganj quarter are some Jain temples. The Golganj market, with its two large gateways, was built by Captain Montgomery, who administered the District under the regency of Sir Richard Jenkins (1818-1830). Chhindwāra was created a municipality in 1867, and the average municipal receipts for the decade ending 1901 were Rs. 13,000, from which they increased to Rs. 17,000 in 1903-04 and Rs. 40,000 in 1905-06. Octroi is the principal head of receipt. There is a pottery industry and the vessels made here have a local reputation. Other industries are the manufacture of ornaments of zinc, brass and bell-metal, and of leather *mots* or large buckets for drawing water. On the outskirts are a number of vegetable gardens, and potatoes are exported to Seonī and Nāgpur. There are no waterworks and the water-supply is obtained from the wells and tanks already mentioned.

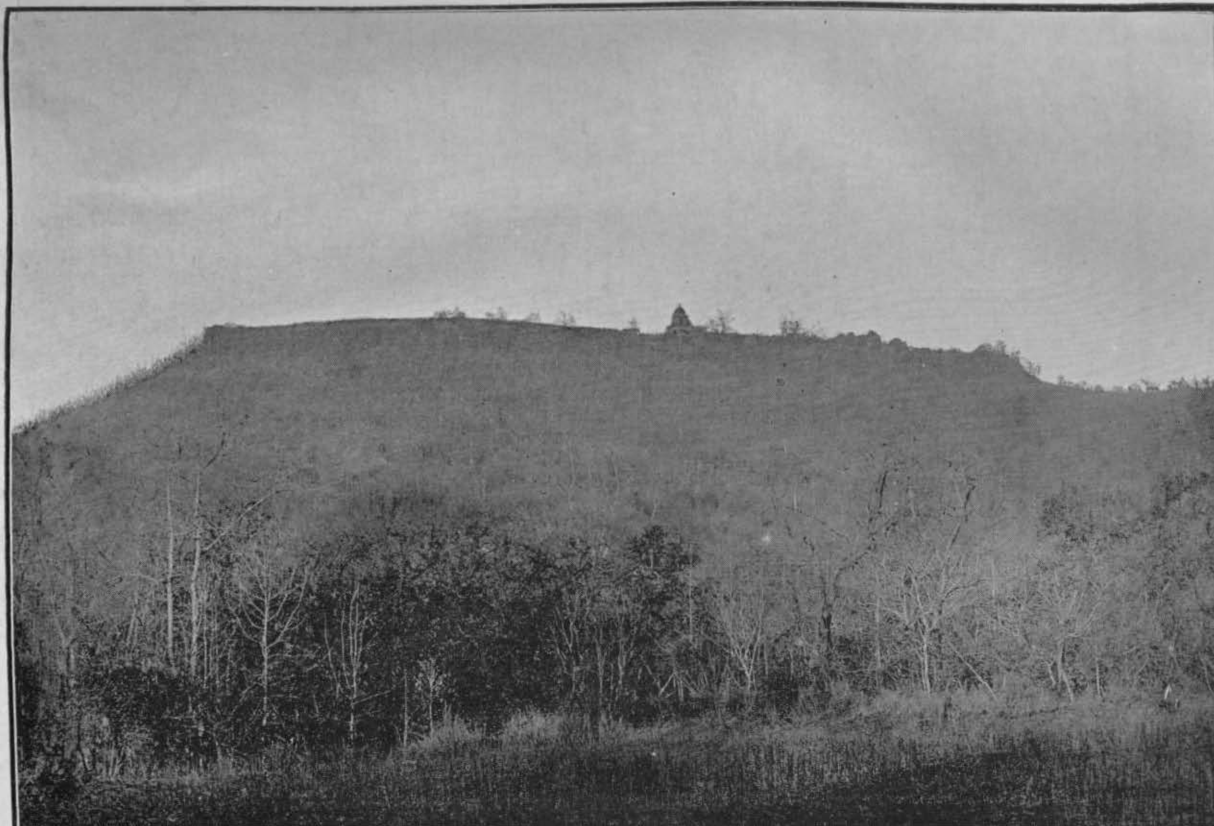


Photo Etching. Roorkee College.

DEOGARH FORT

The town is a centre for the local trade, and markets for the sale of cattle, grain and timber are held on different days of the week. The construction of the railway and the opening of the coal and manganese mines have caused an increase of trade. A grain-market is being built near the railway station. The area of the municipality is 738 acres, of which 312 are *nazúl* or Government property, and the remainder form the village of Chhindwāra, held by several proprietors. The educational institutions comprise municipal, English middle and primary schools for boys, a Government girls' school, and an English middle school for boys and primary schools for boys and girls maintained by the Swedish Mission. The number of pupils in the two middle schools was 160 in 1906. There is a main dispensary and a police hospital, and a veterinary dispensary has also been opened. A town hall is under construction and will cost Rs. 20,000, and a new building for the middle school is also projected. The town has the usual District and tahsīl headquarter offices and a public garden in charge of the Deputy Commissioner.

Chicholi.—A large village in the Sausar tahsīl on the road from Nāgpur to Betūl about 47 miles south of Chhindwāra. Its area is nearly 6000 acres and the population in 1901 was nearly 1900 persons as against more than 2300 in 1891. The village contains one of the reputed tombs of Sheikh Farīd, a well-known Muhammadan saint in the Central Provinces. The people worship at it on Thursdays and Fridays, and a small religious gathering is held on the 6th day of Phāgun (January-February). A Fakīr, who is in charge of the shrine, receives a small allowance from Government. Chicholī also contains a well-known banyan tree, spreading over an area of more than two acres. The residents are mainly Marāthās and Bhoyars. The village has a primary school, a police outpost, and a post office.

Deogarh.—A village and hill fortress in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, situated on the southern range of the Sātpurās about

24 miles south-west of Chhindwāra, and some 13 miles from Umranāla on the Nāgpur road. The village now contains only about 200 persons, but the traces of wells and tanks show that the former city must have extended over a large area. Between one and two miles from the village stand the walls of the old fortress, enclosing the summit of a hill about half a mile in length and 150 to 200 yards wide, with a sheer descent of some 700 yards to the valleys lying on each side of it. To the south the view extends for about twenty miles to the valley of the Kanhān, while on the other sides lie adjoining hill-ranges. The appearance of the walls from the approach to the hill is very picturesque. The chief buildings within the fortress are the Nagārkhāna or gateway of the former residence with a domed roof; the seat of justice, a stone chair formerly surmounted by a canopy; and the Bādal Mahal or cloud palace, an octagonal room with a domed roof and a mosque to the rear of it. There are also the remains of some stone cisterns. According to the local tradition the fort was constructed by the Gaoli kings, Ransur and Ghansur, but the present buildings are Muhammadan in style and may no doubt be attributed to Bakht Buland, the first Deogarh prince of importance, who lived about 1700 A.D. and visited Delhi. All the buildings except the arches are of brick. Below the hill near the village is a grave-yard containing the tombs of several of the Gond kings. Jātba's tomb is in a separate position at a little distance. At the head of the valley, running to the south-east, a wall was built to protect the town from invasion on that side. A number of custard-apple trees grow in the fortress, and the open space of the interior is covered by *rūsa* grass (*Andropogon Schoenanthus*). The proprietor of the village is a Muhammadan.

Ghogri Khāpa.—A small village in the Sausar tahsil, a mile from Mohgaon, with a population of about 200 persons. Close to the village is a fall of the Jām river, over 100 feet in height, and a small fair is held here on the day of Shivrātri. The proprietor is a Paliwāl Brāhman.

Gorakhghat Jagir.—The very small Gorakhghāt jāgīr lies near the northern edge of the hill-range which forms the base of the jāgīrs between Partābgarh and Almod, and commands the Gorakh pass on the way to Pachmarhī. It has an area of 15 square miles and contains only 5 villages. Sir R. Temple stated that the jāgīrdār was one of the hereditary guardians of Mahādeo's shrine at Pachmarhī. The original tenure was a service one, and a *sanad* given in 1820 states that the business of the jāgirdār was to keep the northern passes free of bad characters. The population in 1901 was only 600 persons, and about 1000 acres are under crop in the jāgīr. The name of the present jāgīrdār is Tālan Shā, and he resides at the village of Chhalrā. He is about 27 years old. The family is connected by marriage with the jāgīrdār of Harrai. In 1895 the income was found to be Rs. 1400 excluding realisations from excise. In 1905-06 it was Rs. 1300. More than half the receipts are obtained from the forests of the estate. The *takolī* paid before 1820 was Rs. 20. When in that year the jāgīrdār received a *sanad* from the Resident on behalf of the Rājā of Nāgpur, the *takolī* was remitted and a nominal payment (*Sogad*) of honey, wax, spear-shafts and walking sticks was substituted. This was abolished in 1874, and at last settlement the *takolī* fixed was Rs. 45. The Jāgīrdār receives a stipend of Rs. 21 in lieu of the dues formerly imposed on pilgrims. The estate was taken over by the Court of Wards in 1895 on the application of the owner, who was involved in debt. The debt has now been paid off and the estate is being released.

Gorpani Jagir.—The easternmost of the jāgīrs still remaining in the District, lying on the border of the Seonī District and to the south-east of Harrai. It is a small estate with an area of 31 square miles and only ten villages. The villages of the jāgīr lie along a hilly range and the country is rugged. The jāgīrdārs are Gonds of the Warkarā tribe and were connected by marriage with the Deogarh Rājās; they

have also intermarried with the Batkāgarh family. The estate is said by the jāgīrdār to have originated in a grant of Rājā Raghuji I, but it is possible that the Marāthās merely confirmed an existing tenure. The estate was not mentioned in Sir R. Jenkins' Report as one of the jāgīrs, and in 1822, when *sanads* were issued by the Resident to other jāgīrdārs, Gorpānī received only a *takīd* or letter from the Superintendent of the District. The jāgīrdār's possession of the estate is however recorded as of long standing, and in 1867 the estate was treated as a recognised jāgir and Da Singh, who held up to the time of the last settlement, was constituted jāgīrdār. The present holder is his grandson, Thākur Bāpu Shā, whose age is about 24. He resides at Gorpāni (population 378). The population of the jāgir in 1901 was 1552 persons, having decreased by 25 per cent. during the previous decade. Of the total area, 9000 acres or 42 per cent. are occupied for cultivation and 5000 are under crop. Kodon and kutkī are principally cultivated and a little wheat is grown. The income ascertained in 1895 was nearly Rs. 3000, including Rs. 600 on account of the excise monopoly subsequently resumed. In 1905-06 the income was Rs. 2000. The *takolī* payable to Government is Rs. 81. The jāgīrdār receives no stipend. The estate is not indebted.

Harrai Jagir.—The Harrai jāgīr lies towards the west of the District on a plateau which connects the broad southern line of hill with the northern edge of the Sātpurā range. This plateau has better soil than is usual on the hills, and round Harrai Khās lie comparatively open and good villages. These are succeeded by hilly and jungly villages towards the edge of the estate. A portion of the jāgīr also lies below the Sātpurā passes, leading down to the valley of the Nerbudda. The area of Harrai is 281 square miles and it is the most important of all the estates.

Descriptive.

History.

The Harrai, Partābgarh-Pagāra and Sonpur jāgīrs are the fragments of a single estate, Harrai, which was held by one jāgīrdār at the beginning of the century. The subsequent division was in effect a partition, and the three jāgīrs are held by members of the same family. Mr. Montgomerie[1] gives the following account of it:—'The age and origin of 'the jāgīr cannot be definitely ascertained. A family record, 'about 60 years old, which is in the possession of the Harrai 'jāgīrdār, states that the family was connected with the Rājā 'of Saolīgarh in the Nerbudda valley; that Narayān Rao, the 'founder of the family, came to Deogarh and took service 'with Jātba Shā, the first Gond Rājā, who gave him the village 'Patparā, in the Umreth pargana. This village is still held. 'The record states that Rājā Bakht Buland granted to Jujhār 'Shā, the grandson of Narāyan Rao, the Harrai jāgīr on 'condition of populating it, and encouraging traffic. The 'Partābgarh pargana and the then uninhabited Sonpur-'Dhanorā tāluka were, according to the record, received two 'generations later by Sāngram Shā from Rājā Raghuj 'Bhonsla as a reward for suppressing Muāsi-Korkū raids. 'The date of this grant would be about 1750 A.D. Sangrām 'Shā held the whole estate—Harrai, Partābgarh and Sonpur-'Dhanorā—until his death. Of Sangrām Shā's seven sons the 'eldest died without issue, and consequently the second son, 'Fateh Shā, succeeded. He apparently held the whole estate 'till his death. On his death the estate broke up. Fateh 'Shā left, by his legitimate marriage, a son Jaswant Shā who 'became the head of the family, but since he was a minor the 'management passed into the hands of his uncle Chain Shā, 'the ablest of Sangrām Shā's sons. Fateh Shā had a son 'Rājba Shā, who was actually older than Jaswant Shā, but 'being the son of a less valid form of marriage, was not 'recognised as the head of the family. He was enabled

[1] Settlement Report, p. 84.

however by the strength and number of his party in the 'jāgīr to detach Partābgarh and to maintain his independence during the minority of Jaswant Shā. Chain 'Shā was so far unfaithful to his guardianship that he 'permitted this usurpation and himself seized the 'Sonpur-Dhanorā tāluka of his ward's inheritance, and 'during the disturbances of 1817-18 he seized Harrai 'itself. In consequence of the shelter afforded by the hill 'chiefs to Appa Sāhib in 1818 and their resistance to the 'British force, Chain Shā and Rājba Shā were deported to 'Chānda, where they died. At the time of the settlement 'of 1820, three interests existed, that of Jaswant Shā, the 'legitimate head of the family, that of Rājba Shā, and that 'of Chain Shā. Jaswant Shā was in 1820 confirmed as 'head of the family with possession of the Harrai jāgīr ; and 'the Sonpur jāgīr, consisting of the Sonpur and Dhanorā 'tālukas, was conferred on Sone Shā, the son of Chain Shā. 'But Partābgarh was held direct until 1826. Then Captain 'Montgomery, Superintendent of Affairs, Chhindwāra, recommended that both Partābgarh and Sonpur be reunited to 'the main jāgīr under the headship of Jaswant Shā and that 'then the Partābgarh jāgīr be granted to Rājba Shā's son 'Ranjīt Shā and the Sonpur jāgīr together with the Bamhni 'tāluka of Partābgarh be granted to the possessor Sone 'Shā, son of Chain Shā, subject in each case to their being 'held as from Jaswant Shā, the head of the family. At the 'same time it was proposed that the Māhuljhir, Chāwalpāni 'and Khunia tālukas of Partābgarh be granted to the three 'sons of Sangrām Shā's son Anand Shā, for maintenance in 'subordination to Partābgarh. To these proposals the 'Resident assented, and possession has since remained in 'accordance with them. At the provisional settlement of '1867 and in the grant of the 1874 *sanad*, no question arises 'of Partābgarh-Pagāra and Sonpur being subordinate to 'Harrai. These estates are therefore now treated as being 'independent of Harrai.'

Union of Harrai and Partābgarh-Pagāra.

The original Harrai family has now split into wide ramifications, and Mr. Montgomerie drew up a genealogy of them, beginning from the father of Sangrām Shā, the first holder of the three jāgirs. According to this, seventy of Sangrām Shā's descendants were living in 1895 and the family was divided into twelve branches, who held the three jāgirs and various grants of estates and villages within them. Mardān Shā, the present owner of Harrai, is the grandson of the Jaswant Shā who was despoiled by his brother and uncle. In 1902, the line of Sone Shā, son of the wicked uncle Chain Shā to whom the Partābgarh-Pagāra jāgīr was awarded in 1826, became extinct, and Mardān Shā succeeded to it. He is now therefore the Jāgīrdār of Harrai and Partābgarh-Pagāra. His age is 52 years. He keeps up a good deal of state and is said to be incurring debts in spite of having received a large cash balance with the Pagāra jāgīr in 1902. He manages his estates satisfactorily, especially Harrai, with which he is better acquainted than with Pagāra. The two estates are separated by the Batkāgarh jāgīr. He has no son and his heir is a distant agnate, Thākur Madhuban Shā, a young man of limited education. His only daughter was married to the late jāgīrdār of Batkāgarh and is a widow. The jāgīrdār lives at Harrai.

Population and revenue.

The population of the Harrai jāgir in 1901 was 10,289 persons, having decreased by 14 per cent. during the previous decade. The villages about Harrai are in open country, and the remainder are generally surrounded by forest. The density of population is 37 persons per square mile, and the jāgir contains 94 villages, of which 4 are uninhabited. Of the total number of villages, 45 are held *mukāsa* or on quit-rent either by other branches of the family or as religious grants or in lieu of service. Of the total area, 50,oco acres or 31 per cent. are occupied for cultivation, and 59,000 acres are

covered by tree-forest. The cropped area is 28,000 acres, the principal crop being kodon-kutkī and the others wheat, rice and pulses. The construction of the roads from Chhindwāra to Narsinghpur and Piparia, passing through the jāgīr, has enabled the forests to be exploited and a considerable income is now derived from this source. The income of the estate in 1895 was found to be Rs. 15,000, excluding the receipts from excise, which have since been resumed. Forests and land revenue contributed about equally to the receipts. In 1905-06 the income amounted to Rs. 17,000. The *takolī* assessed is Rs. 693. The Jāgīrdār receives a grant of Rs. 3800 from Government annually in lieu of the transit duties formerly levied.

Harrai Village.—The headquarters of the Harrai jāgīr in the Chhindwāra tahsil, 49 miles from Chhindwāra. Its population in 1901 was 1600 persons as against 1800 in 1891. The jāgīrdār resides in a fort about 300 years old lying outside the village. There is a fine mango grove here and a garden, and a tank was constructed in the famine of 1897. The village has a primary school, a branch post office and a police outpost. An inspection bungalow has been erected. A weekly market is held on Tuesdays.

Jam River.—A river which rises among the hills separating Chhindwāra and Betūl about 4 miles from Taigaon on the road from Pāndhurnā to Multai. It flows to the east, passing the town of Pāndhurnā and joins the Kanhān near Lodhikhedā after a course of about 50 miles. Its bed is rocky and deep and its current swift. There are waterfalls near Nīlkanthī and Ghogrī Khāpa.

Jamunia.—A village in the Chhindwāra tahsil, 11 miles from Chhindwāra to the right of the Narsinghpur road. The village is close to the Pench river and a small stream flows through Jamunia to join it. The population is about 400 persons. A fair of some importance is held in Jamunia for the festival of Shivrātri in February or March and lasts for 15 days, the daily attendance being estimated at about 5000

persons. About 300 temporary shops are opened and cloth, bangles, toys, iron and metal vessels, carts, wheels, wooden furniture, saddles and other articles are brought for sale. Cattle races are held and also an agricultural exhibition, at which prizes are given by Government. In recent years some juāri-shredders and maize-threshers have been distributed as prizes. People come from the surrounding Districts to attend the fair. The village has a primary school for boys. The proprietor is a Raghuvansi.

Kanhan River.—A river which rises in the Sātpurā hills in the Bhardāgarh jāgīr and after being joined by the Bel flows south through the Chhindwāra tahsīl until it reaches the head of the southern Sātpurā range where it is diverted to the east. It then winds through a series of small hills passing close to the old fort of Deogarh and crosses the Nāgpur road at Rāmākonā, being afterwards joined by the Jām near Lodhīkherā. Near Sillori above Rāmākonā there is a small waterfall. It then flows south and east into the Nāgpur District, being crossed by railway and road bridges above Kamptee and joins the Waingangā. The Pench falls into the Kanhān above Kamptee. The total length of the river is nearly 160 miles, of which above 70 lie within the Chhindwāra District. Its width is from 450 to 800 yards in the lower part of its course. During the height of the monsoon timber is floated from the Chhindwāra forests down to Kamptee, but otherwise the river is not navigable. The bed of the river is rocky for the first fifty miles of its course, but after this it flows through a deep channel with a sandy bed and its banks are bare or covered with short scrub. At Nerī, a few miles below Kamptee, there is a short stretch of alluvial land of extreme fertility in the river bed, but this is the only variation in its monotony of sand. In places the fields on its banks are fertilised by deposits of silt. The arhar grown on the banks of the Kanhān is said to have a specially soft and sweet flavour.

Kulbehra River.—A river which rises at the junction of three small streams near Umreth, and flows east through the Chhindwāra tahsīl, crossing the Nāgpur road a few miles south of Chhindwāra. It then turns to the south and joins the Pench near Chānd after a winding course of more than 50 miles. The bed of the river contains sandy stretches on which water-melons and cucumbers are grown. Two small fairs are held on its banks at Guraiyā and Kālighāt near Lingā. The banks are generally high and bare of vegetation.

Lodhikhera.—A large village in the Sausar tahsīl, 38 miles from Chhindwāra and 5 miles to the east of the Nāgpur road The name means 'The village of the Lodhis', but very few Lodhis now reside there. Its area is about 2000 acres and the population was 4181 persons in 1901 as against 5160 in 1891. The village stands on a high bank of gravel soil above the Jām river and five flights of steps lead down to the river. Lodhikherā was formerly a more important place than at present, and up to 1898 was a municipal town. Since that date a fund of Rs. 1200 annually has been raised and administered by a Sanitary Committee under the Village Sanitation Act. A dispensary which existed here has also been removed. Lodhikherā was best known for a considerable brass-working industry, but this has declined on account of its unfavourable situation for trade at a distance from the railway and main roads. There are about a hundred houses of Kasārs, but they are not prosperous, and many of the workers have migrated elsewhere. There is also a cotton hand weaving industry, but this too is declining. A weekly market is held on Tuesdays for cattle and general merchandise, but it is overshadowed by the neighbouring bazar of Rāmākonā. The village has a vernacular middle school with nearly 200 pupils enrolled, a police outpost, a branch post office and a *sarai.* The roads are still maintained in good condition and are lighted with lamps at night. Lodhikherā is held on quit-rent by Rāja Raghuji Rao Bhonsla.

Lonia Kalan.—A village in the Chhindwāra tahsīl about two miles from the Chānd-Chaurai road on the Pench river. The population is about 700 persons and the proprietor is a Raghuvansī. There are hot and cold sulphur springs here in which people bathe, and the water is believed to be a preventive against eruptions of the skin.

Mohgaon.—A large village in the Sausar tahsīl, 37 miles from Chhindwāra and 5 miles from Sausar by a village road. Its area is about 2400 acres and the population numbered 5730 persons in 1901, as against 5565 in 1891. The town stands on both sides of the Sāmpna or 'snake' stream. There are two old temples and the village has been identified with the Mohamagrāma mentioned in a copper-plate grant of the Rāshtrakūta dynasty in the tenth century. The temple of Vithobā has an endowment fund in charge of the Government. The village is also known as Havelī Mohgaon. It was the headquarters of a Marāthā Sūbah or governor and a detachment of cavalry was stationed here. It was the headquarters of the tahsīl up to 1865. The population includes a number of Muhamadans and Telis and some learned Brāhmans. A fair is held at the time of the Diwāli festival at which the Ahirs perform the Mandhaī or stick-dance. Up to 1901 Mohgaon was a municipal town, but in that year the municipality was abolished and the provisions of the Village Sanitation Act were applied to the village, the fund having an income of about Rs. 1200 annually. In 1905 a severe epidemic of plague occurred and many houses are now deserted. There is a cotton hand-weaving industry and a number of traders and moneylenders reside here. A ginning factory has been opened. A number of orange gardens have been planted in the village lands. Mohgaon has a vernacular middle school with 130 pupils enrolled in 1906, a police outpost and a post office. A large weekly market is held on Saturdays. The proprietor is a Muhammadan.

Mohkher.—A large village in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, 14

miles south of Chhindwāra, with an area of 830 acres and a population of 2160 persons in 1901, as against 2100 in 1891. The residents are principally Mālis and Brāhmans, and there are also a number of Telis who ply carts for hire. A market is held on Mondays, to which considerable quantities of grain are brought for sale. Mohkher had formerly an export trade in *ghī*, and leather bottles, called *budlā*, for holding grain and *ghī* are made here by Būdalgir Chamārs. These Chamārs consider themselves superior to others because they will not tan leather. Glass bangles are also made. Mohkher has a vernacular middle school with 130 boys enrolled, a police outpost and a branch post office. The proprietor is a Kunbi. About two miles from Mohkher in the forest near Gadmau is a spring, falling over a high rock into two pools. These are known as Rānīkasā, or the Rānī's lake and Rishīdoh, the pool of the Sādhus. The Rānī's lake has a number of fine fish and these are considered to be the spirits of the queens of a legendary Gond king, called Dindulhā, because he took a fresh wife every day. About three miles from the pools are an old fort and well, where the king is supposed to have lived and to which it is said that an underground passage leads from the Rānī's pool.

Nilkanthi.—A village in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, 14 miles to the south-east of Chhindwāra, with a population of about 200 persons. On the bank of the Tiphanā stream near the village are the ruins of some temples. The entrance gate of the main temple is still standing, and was formerly enclosed within a retaining wall about 264 feet long by 132 wide. It is of the mediæval Brāhmanic style without cement, the stones being secured by iron clamps. There are also the remains of a small fort called Parkotā and of a Bhonwarā or terrace. On a pillar which appears formerly to have belonged to the temple is an inscription, much defaced by the sharpening of agricultural implements against the stone. It mentions king Krishna III of the

Rāshtrakūta line, who lived in the 10th century. Another fragmentary inscription has recently been discovered, giving the name of the same king and stating him to belong to the Lunar race.[1] As the name Nīlkanthī is an appellation of Mahādeo, the temples were probably Sivite. The local tradition is that the temples were built by a king called Nīlkanth whose body lies before them in the shape of a block of stone, while his head is 30 miles off in a village called Chādni Kubdī. At the latter place an enemy who had seduced his wife turned him into a deer and cut off his head, upon which his trunk flew back to Nīlkanthī and lay before the temple of Mahādeo which he had built. The proprietor of the village is a Muhammadan.

Pachmarhi Jagir.—This jāgīr is split up into eight separate tracts, lying partly in the valley to the south-east of the Mahādeo hills and partly much further south near the *khālsa* area of the Chhindwāra tahsīl. The area of the jāgīr is 104 square miles. It originally included Pachmarhi village, but about 1871 Government acquired the village lands, their area being nearly 15,000 acres. The jāgīrdār preferred receiving other land to taking the compensation assessed and 22 villages, then reserved as Government waste lands near the jāgīrdār's southern villages were therefore allotted to him. The estate has good *saleh* (*Boswellia serrata*) and *sāj* (*Terminalia tomentosa*) forests with a sprinkling of teak. Of the two principal slices of the jāgīr, the Nandorā tract adjoining the *khālsa* area is open and well cultivated, as is also the detached village of Māyāwāri near Pagāra. The lands to the south-east of the Mahādeo range are hilly, but contain some valuable timber.

Description.

This jāgīrdār is a Muāsi Korkū, all the others in the District being Raj-Gonds. He and the jāgīrdār of Bāriām-Pagāra are hereditary guardians of the shrine of Mahādeo at Pachmarhī.

Family history.

[1] See also the Chapter on History.

The jāgīr was originally conferred by the Gond Rājās and constituted a single estate in conjunction with those of Bāriām-Pagāra and Harrākot, which are now in the Hoshangābād District ; but the estate was divided among three brothers, and Harrākot was subsequently confiscated from its holder for complicity in the Mutiny. In 1859 on the death of Mahandar Singh the then jāgīrdār, Pachmarhī passed to his brother Garab Singh for life, the direct heir and son of the last jāgīrdār, Sumer Singh, being then a minor. This arrangement was sanctioned by the Government of India on the understanding that it was the custom of the family. Garab Singh outlived Sumer Singh, but on his death, Sumer Singh's son Balwant Singh was recognised as jāgīrdār and is in possession at present. He is 29 years old.

Population and resources.

In 1901 the population was 5402 persons, being practically the same as in 1891. The density per square mile is 52 persons or the highest of any jāgīr in the District. The estate contains 51 villages, of which 6 are situated in the Hoshangābād District, and six of those in Chhindwāra are uninhabited. Most of the villages have one or more hamlets which may at any time become separated from the parent village, and the returns have therefore a tendency to fluctuate. Four villages are held on *mukāsa* tenure by inferior proprietors. The jāgīrdār resides at Jhonth. Nearly 15,000 acres or 30 per cent. of the total area are occupied for cultivation and about 9000 acres are under crop. The small millets, kodon and kutki, are principally grown. The Chhindwāra-Matkulī road with its branch from Kuābādla to Pachmarhi through the Mahādeo hills is of great advantage to the jāgīr. The receipts were ascertained in 1895 to be about Rs. 6000, excluding the excise revenue. In 1905-06 they amounted to Rs. 8000, the greater part being derived from forests. The *takoli* payable by the jāgīrdār is Rs. 267. His ancestors were accustomed to levy a tax on the pilgrims to Mahādeo's shrine at Pachmarhi, but this was

abolished in 1820, and a stipend granted in lieu of it. The amount received by the jāgirdār on this account at present is Rs. 320 annually. The estate was taken under the Court of Wards in 1894 on account of the mismanagement of the then holder, Garab Singh, and was made over to Balwant Singh on Garab Singh's death in 1906. During the twelve years' management, debts, amounting to Rs. 17,000, were paid, and Rs. 12,000 spent on the improvement of the estate, while a balance of Rs. 7500 was handed over with it. The condition of the estate has greatly improved, and its income has doubled during this period. in spite of the loss of the income from excise and pounds, the compensation paid for the resumption of this being Rs. 13,000. A police outpost and a school are maintained at Delakhari.

Palatwara.—A small village in the Chhindwāra tahsil, 3 miles from Chhindwāra on the Pench river, with a population of about 400 persons. A weekly market is held on Tuesdays, to which large quantities of *san*-hemp are brought for sale during the five months after the harvest. A religious gathering also takes place on the last day of Kārtik, being held in a mango-grove adjoining the river where there is a shrine of Mahādeo. People bring the bones of their deceased relatives and throw them into the Pench. The fair lasts for about twelve days. The village is held in shares by different proprietors.

Pandhurna.—A municipal town in the Sausar tahsil, situated about 54 miles south of Chhindwāra on the main road from Nāgpur to Betūl, and on the Jām river. Another road leads from Pāndhurnā into Berār. The villages of Bamhnī and Sāwargaon adjoin Pāndhurnā, being separated by the Jām and the small stream of the Lendī, and are included in the municipality, their united population being 8904 persons in 1901 as against 6058 in 1891. The united area of the three villages is more than 4000 acres, of which only about 20 acres are Government land. There is nothing ...

by the large houses of the leading bankers. Some fine temples are in course of erection. The site of the town is threatened by erosion from the Jām river. Pāndhurnā was created a municipality in 1867, and the annual receipts during the decade ending 1901 averaged Rs. 3000. In 1905-06 they had risen to nearly Rs. 8000, being mainly derived from a house-tax. The town stands in the centre of a cotton-growing tract, and the people are prosperous, a number of well-to-do mālguzārs and cultivators of the surrounding villages living in Pāndhurnā, where accommodation is already scarce. Two cotton-ginning factories have lately been opened and a pressing factory is under construction. There is a considerable trade in cotton and also a hand-weaving industry. Glass and lac bangles and fireworks are also manufactured. A large weekly market is held on Fridays, at which several hundred head of cattle are brought for sale besides other articles. If the contemplated railway connecting Nāgpur with Itārsi should pass Pāndhurnā, its importance will be greatly increased. The local institutions comprise a first-grade vernacular middle school with 250 pupils enrolled in 1906, a municipal *sarai* and a dispensary which has been located in the old fort. There are a police Station-house, a branch post office and a sub-registration office. The proprietor of Pāndhurnā is a wealthy Mārwāri or Pallīwāl Brāhman. A curious local custom may be noted. On the night of the Polā festival the village kotwār plants a *palās* tree (*Butea frondosa*) in the bed of the Jām river. Next day the people of Pāndhurnā contend with those of the adjoining village of Sāwargaon for the possession of the tree. Stones are thrown and wounds are frequently inflicted. But in the end the Pāndhurnā people must always get the tree, or some calamity will occur during the year. The custom is celebrated in honour of Chandi Devī.

Partabgarh-Pagara Jagir.—This estate stretches from the *khālsa* area of Chhindwāra tahsil northwards up to the Nerbudda valley

Description.

in the north of the District, between Pachmarhī and Batkāgarh. Its southern part lies on the great hill chain of the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and the centre and north are situated in the valley to the east of the Mahādeo range. The area of the jāgīr is 494 square miles, and it occupies about a third of the whole area of the jāgīrdāri estates, of which it is much the largest. The open valley to the north is occupied by the Māhuljhir, Chāwalpāni and Khunia *mukāsa* estates and patches of black soil occur here. The Pench river takes its rise in the Motur estate on the main hill-range. Motur was tried as a sanitarium for soldiers in preference to Pachmarhī, but the water-supply being deficient and the surroundings unattractive, it was abandoned. Motur gives its name to a geological group of the Gondwāna system.

Historical notice.

The jāgīr was formerly united with Harrai and Sonpur and was seized by Rājba Shā, a son of Sangrām Shā, the last holder of the three estates, from his brother, the legitimate heir. Rājba Shā was deported to Chānda for complicity in Appa Sāhib's rebellion, and in 1826 the Partābgarh estate was conferred on his son Ranjīt Shā. The Māhuljhir, Chāwalpāni and Khunia estates were, however, conferred in *mukāsa* tenure on three sons of Anand Shā, third son of the common ancestor Sangrām Shā. The descendants of these grantees still hold and pay nothing to the jāgīrdār. The estates have been partitioned, but the head of the family in each case still takes the forest revenue and the cesses, though they successfully resisted a similar claim on the part of the jāgīrdār of Partābgarh-Pagāra.[1] The Motur estate is held free of revenue by a family who claim to be an offshoot of the Almod jāgīrdārs. Ranjīt Shā's son, Mahipat Shā, died in 1878, and the estate was then taken under the Court of Wards on behalf of his minor son Drigpāl Shā. But this boy died in 1902, soon after attaining his majority and the jāgīrdār of Harrai then

1 Order No. 53, dated 4th August 1883, of the Chief Commissioner.

succeeded to Partābgarh-Pagāra and holds the two estates.

Population and resources.

The population in 1901 was 19,489 persons, having decreased by more than 5 per cent. during the preceding decade. The density of population is 40 persons per square mile, and the jāgīr has 176 villages, of which 45 are uninhabited. Of the *mukāsa* estates held free of revenue, Chāwalpāni and Māhuljhir each contained 12 villages at settlement, and Khunia and Motur each had 8 villages. Some 22 other villages are also held by grantees as dowry or on service tenure, and their possessors are recorded as inferior proprietors; but the jāgīrdār realises the forest revenue and local rates from these. Of the total area 69,000 acres or 22 per cent. are occupied for cultivation, and 85,000 acres are covered by tree-forest. The cropped area is 39,000 acres, the principal crops being kodon-kutkī (13,000), gram (3600), and wheat (2000). In 1895 the receipts from the estate were found to be Rs. 20,000, excluding those from excise. In 1905-06 they were Rs. 42,000, more than half the income being derived from the estate forests. The *takolī* payable is Rs. 739. The principal village is Pagāra, lying below the hills at the southern extremity of the estate. There is a post office here, while Tāmia and Chāwalpāni have both a post office and a police outpost.

Pench River.—A river which rises in the Motur estate and flows east through the Chhindwāra tahsīl with a slight southerly inclination as far as the Seonī border; here it turns sharply south, forming the boundary between Seonī and Chhindwāra until it enters the Nāgpur District, and falls into the Kanhān near Kamptee. It crosses the Piparia road near Belgaon, the Narsinghpur road near Singorī, and the Seonī road near Jhilmilī. Of its total length of 120 miles, about 100 miles are in the Chhindwāra tahsīl. Its width is 500 yards near Naghorā in Nāgpur.

The river is said to get its name from its zig-zag course, *pench* meaning a screw. The Pench drains an extensive area of country within the hills, and its upper reaches among the hills and forests north of Bhīmgarh, and the falls near Matolī in the Nāgpur District afford some picturesque scenery. For a large part of its length the valley of the river is little cultivated, and is clothed with teak forest. Its principal affluent is the Kulbehrā, and other less important ones in the Chhindwāra District are the Rechan, Khajrī and Bohnā. Extensive deposits of coal exist in the upper Pench valley. The fairs of Jamunia and Palatwāda are held on its banks in the Chhindwāra District, the bones of the dead being thrown into the river at the latter fair. Some reaches of the Pench afford excellent mahseer-fishing.

Pipla Narainwar.—A large village in the Sausar tahsīl, about 6 miles south of Sausar, on the Jām river. The village takes its name from the pipal tree, and it is also called 'Bhungāra kā Pipla' after a well-known Kunbī resident of that name. It is known as Narainwār on account of a temple of Vishnu, which has recently been built. The population was nearly 3300 persons, both in 1901 an 1891. The old site was destroyed by the encroachments of the Jām river, and a new village has been laid out with regular roads. Many proprietors and cultivators of other villages live in Pipla for the sake of comfort and society, and go out to their own villages to carry on cultivation, some having a second house there. A weekly market is held on Wednesdays, to which cattle and other commodities are brought for sale. The village has a primary school, and a branch post office. The proprietor is a Rājput.

Raghadevi.—A small village in the Sausar tahsīl, about 10 miles from Rāmākonā on the east of the Nāgpur road. There is a temple of Mahādeo here in a cave, to which access is obtained from the side of a well. It is supposed that an underground passage leads from this cave to Mahādeo's cave at Pachmarhi and that the god fled through

this when pursued by the demon Bhainsāsur. The priest in charge of the temple is a Gond Bhumkā. A small fair is held on the festival of Shivrātri in February-March and lasts for three days, the site being in reserved forest. A few temporary shops are opened for the sale of vessels and provisions. The proprietor of the village is a Brāhman.

Ramakona.—A large village in the Sausar tahsīl, 6 miles from Sausar and 28 miles from Chhindwāra on the Nāgpur road and standing on the Kanhān river. Adjoining Rāmākonā is another village called Sītāpār, and the two villages received their names because Rāma and Sitā are supposed to have sojourned here. The population was more than 1300 persons in 1901, having increased by about 150 during the previous decade. Rāmākonā has the most important weekly market in the District, held on Sundays. Grain and cotton from Chhindwāra are brought here by the cultivators, and sold to cartmen and other agents who carry them to Nāgpur. Several hundred carts assemble, and the road is often blocked for nearly a mile. The opening of the railway may have the effect of decreasing the importance of the bazar. Wheat is the staple chiefly dealt in, and a number of cattle are also sold. On the 6th day of Phāgun (February-March) a fair is held in honour of Vithobā, whose temple stands on the Kanhān river. Vithobā was an incarnation of Krishna who appeared in Pandharpur near Poona, and the image in the temple is believed to have been brought from Pandharpur by a local Kunbī saint called Hirāman. He is said to have been a poor labourer, and having committed a theft, became a religious mendicant in atonement for it. Every year on the 6th day of Phāgun he fed the people, and once, when *ghī* ran short, he had water brought from the Kanhān, and it turned into *ghī*; and after all the people had eaten of it profusely, the same quantity of *ghī* was thrown back into the Kanhān. This saint flourished about fifty years ago. The fair lasts for about five days, the attendance being from 10,000 to 20,000

persons, and the people bathe in the Kanhān. Bowls of curds and milk are broken, and let fall on to the heads of the people in honour of Krishna, the idea being that all the people thus eat in common. Some 300 temporary shops are opened for the sale of jewellery, cloth, vessels and provisions, and there is also some trade in cattle. Rāmākonā has a primary school, a police outpost, a post office, a dāk bungalow and a *sarai*. The proprietor is a Brāhman.

Satpura Hills.[1]—A range of hills in the centre of India. The name, which is modern, originally belonged only to the hills which divide the Nerbudda and Tāpti valleys in Nimār (Central Provinces), and which were styled the *sāt putra* or seven sons of the Vindhyan mountains. Another derivation is from *sāt purā* (seven folds), referring to the numerous parallel ridges of the range. The term Sātpurā is now, however, customarily applied to the whole range, which, commencing at Amarkantak in Rewah, Central India (22° 40′ N., 81° 46′ E.), runs south of the Nerbudda river, nearly down to the western coast. The Sātpurās are sometimes, but incorrectly, included under the Vindhya range. Taking Amarkantak as the eastern boundary, the Sātpurās extend from east to west for about 600 miles, and, in their greatest depth, exceed 100 miles from north to south. The shape of the range is almost triangular. From Amarkantak an outer ridge runs south-west for about 100 miles to the Sāletekrī hills in the Bālāghāt District, thus forming, as it were, the head of the range, which, shrinking as it proceeds westward from a broad tableland to two parallel ridges, ends, so far as the Central Provinces are concerned, at the famous hill fortress of Asīrgarh. Beyond this point the Rājpīpla hills, which separate the valley of the Nerbudda from that of the Tāpti, complete the chain as far as the Western Ghāts. On the tableland comprised

Geographical position.

[1] The article on the Sātpurā Hills is a reprint from the draft article for the Imperial Gazetteer.

between the northern and southern faces of the range are situated the Districts of Mandlā, part of Bālāghāt, Seonī, Chhindwāra, and Betūl.

Geological formation.

The superficial stratum covering the main Sātpurā range is trappean, but in parts of all the Central Provinces Districts which it traverses, crystalline rocks are uppermost, and over the Pachmarhī hills the sandstone is also uncovered. In Mandlā the higher peaks are capped with laterite. On the north and south the approaches to the Sātpurās are marked as far west as Turanmāl by low lines of foot-hills. These are succeeded by the steep slopes leading up to the summit of the plateau traversed in all directions by narrow deep ravines hollowed out by the action of the streams and rivers, and covered throughout their extent with forest.

Features of the plateau.

Portions of the Sātpurā plateau consist, as in the Mandlā and the north of the Chhindwāra District, of a rugged mass of hills hurled together by volcanic action. But the greater part is an undulating tableland, a succession of bare stony ridges, and narrow fertile valleys, into which the soil has been deposited by drainage. In a few level tracts as in the valleys of the Māchna and Sāmpna near Betūl, and the open plain between Seonī and Chhindwāra, there are extensive areas of productive land. Scattered over the plateau isolated flat-topped hills rise abruptly from the plain. The scenery of the northern and southern hills, as observed from the roads which traverse them, is of remarkable beauty. The drainage of the Sātpurās is carried off on the north by the Nerbudda river and to the south by the Waingangā, Wardhā and Tāpti, all of which have their source in these hills.

Heights.

The highest peaks are contained in the northern range rising abruptly from the valley of the Nerbudda and generally sloping down

to the plateau, but towards the west the southern range has the greater elevation. Another noticeable feature is a number of small tablelands lying among the hills at a greater height than the bulk of the plateau. Of these Pachmarhī (3530 feet) and Chikaldā in Berār (3664 feet) have been formed into hill stations, while Raigarh (2200 feet) in the Bālāghāt District and Khāmla in Betūl (3700 feet) are famous grazing and breeding grounds for cattle. Dhūpgarh (4454 feet) is the highest point on the range, and there are a few others of over 4000. Among the peaks that rise from 3000 to 3800 feet above sea-level, the grandest is Turanmāl (Bombay Presidency), a long, rather narrow tableland 3300 feet above the sea and about 16 square miles in area. West of this the mountainous land presents a wall-like appearance both towards the Nerbudda on the north and the Tāpti on the south. On the eastern side the Tāsdīn Valī (Central India) commands a magnificent view of the surrounding country. The general height of the plateau is about 2000 feet.

Forests.

The hills and slopes are covered by forest extending over some thousands of square miles, but much of this is of little value owing to unrestricted fellings prior to the adoption of a system of conservancy, and to the shifting cultivation practised by the aboriginal tribes, which led to patches being annually cleared and burnt down. The most valuable forests are those of the *sāl* tree (*Shorea robusta*) on the eastern hills, and the teak on the west.

Hill tribes and communications.

The Sātpurā hills have formed in the past a refuge for the aboriginal or Dravidian tribes, driven out of the plains by the advance of Hindu civilisation. Here they retired and occupied the stony and barren slopes which the new settlers, with the rich lowlands at their disposal, disdained to cultivate, and here they still rear their light rain crops of millets which are scarcely more than grass, barely

tickling the soil with the plough and eking out a scanty subsistence with the roots and fruits of the forests, and the pursuit of game. The Baigās, the wildest of these tribes, have even now scarcely attained to the rudiments of cultivation, but the Gonds, the Korkūs and the Bhils have made some progress by contact with their Hindu neighbours. The open plateau has for two or three centuries been peopled by Hindu immigrants, but it is only in the last fifty years that travelling has been rendered safe and easy by the construction of metalled roads winding up the steep passes, and enabling wheeled traffic to pass over the heavy land of the valleys. Till then such trade as there was, was conducted by nomad Banjārās on pack-bullocks. The first railway across the Sātpurā plateau, a narrow-gauge extension of the Bengal-Nāgpur line from Gondia to Jubbulpore, was opened in 1905. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway, from Bombay to Jubbulpore, runs through a break in the range just east of Asīrgarh, while the Bombay-Agra branch road crosses further to the west.

Sausar Tahsil.[1]—The southern tahsīl of the District, lying between 21° 28′ and 21° 55′ N. and 78° 20′ and 79° 16′ E. The southern range of the Sātpurā plateau forms generally a well-marked line of division between the Sausar tahsil lying to the south of it and the Chhindwāra tahsīl, and the Sausar tahsīl may be considered broadly to form in respect of its agriculture and population a part of the Nāgpur plain. The total area is 1103 square miles or 24 per cent. of that of the District. Four principal tracts may be distinguished, two being extensions of the hill country and two low-lying. Of the two former, the Khamārpāni pargana is situated in the east and the Ambāra tāluka in the west of the tahsil. Khamārpāni is high-lying with small plateaus and a central valley. It is largely covered by forest and forms a well-known cattle-

General Description.

[1] The description of the tahsīl is taken from Mr. Montgomerie's Tahsīl Report.

breeding tract. Its reputed unhealthiness acts as a bar to the immigration of cultivating castes. The second hill tract extends irregularly from the north along the west and towards the centre of the tahsīl, being mainly included in the Ambāra pargana. The first low-lying area may be called the Pāndhurnā valley, and runs in an irregular line from the western hills to the Nāgpur border, occupying the south-east of the tahsīl. This valley has some real black soil, but no such large expanse as the Chhindwāra plain. A block of irregular hills divides the Pāndhurnā valley from the most characteristic part of the tahsīl, the Sausar tract, which covers the greater part of the Mohgaon pargana. Lying in the centre of the tahsīl on both sides of the Nāgpur road, this tract is of a light, often shallow soil, carefully cultivated, carefully manured, and sown with cotton and juār, to the exclusion of almost all crops except the subsidiary tūr, *popat* or beans and mūng.

Population.

The population of the tahsīl in 1901 was 121,148 persons as against 120,451 in 1891 and 110,809 in 1881. Between 1881 and 1891 the population increased by 9 per cent., and during the last decade by 0·6 per cent., the tahsīl having been only slightly distressed in 1897, though it suffered severely in 1900. The density of population was 110 persons per square mile, being slightly less than in the *khālsa* area of Chhindwāra. The tahsīl has three towns, Sausar, Pāndhurnā and Mohgaon and 472 villages, according to the village lists, of which 53 are uninhabited. The most important villages are Lodhikherā (4181), Pīpla Narainwār (3254) and Berdī (2737), and fifteen other villages besides these contained more than 1000 persons in 1901. The Khamārpāni and Ambāra parganas are inhabited chiefly by Gonds who still constitute a quarter of the whole population, while the principal cultivating castes are Kunbīs and Bhoyars. The stronghold of the Kunbīs is the cotton-juār country of the Sausar group. They are excellent cultivators with a fairly

good standard of living, and spend more on their marriages than the Kurmīs. The Bhoyars are excellent all-round cultivators and prefer mixed holdings of spring and autumn crops, such as are found in the Pāndhurnā valley. A number of Ahīrs, who are professional cattle-breeders, reside on the Khamārpāni plateau.

Agriculture.

The representative soil of the tahsīl is light coloured and friable. Only 16 per cent. of the cultivated area contains black soil, about a fifth is classed under the moderate soil *morand* II, and the remainder is covered by the so-called inferior soils, *retāri*, *khardī* and *bardī*. Much of this land however, with careful cultivation and manure, produces valuable crops of cotton and juār. Of the total area, 332 square miles or 30 per cent. are reserved as Government forests, and 136 square miles or 12 per cent. consist of private forest and grass land. Of the village area of 759 square miles, a proportion of 63 per cent. was occupied for cultivation in 1905-06 as against 58 per cent. at last settlement, and 44 per cent. at the 30 years' settlement. The cultivated area in 1905-06 was 282,000 acres. Mr. Montgomerie considered that 153 square miles remained available for cultivation at the time when he wrote, of which 38 square miles have since been brought under the plough. The statistics of cropping at last settlement and during the years 1900-06 are shown on the following page.

Year.	Juār.	Wheat.	Gram.	Kodon-kutki.	Rice.	Til.	Jagni.	Arhar.	Cotton.	Sugar-cane.	Total cropped area (includes double cropped area).
At last settlement ...	87,693	19,115	10,605	7,705	2,034	3,927	8,527	15,532	51,748	417	227,660
1900-01	100,504	6,868	2,899	8,394	872	15,666	2,471	20,416	57,475	191	229,817
1901-02	107,261	12,092	5,440	7,834	1,101	11,834	5,460	19,831	59,247	275	245,245
1902-03	108,631	9,432	5,246	6,772	1,103	10,605	4,550	21,411	66,615	266	248,082
1903-04	97,906	13,692	6,367	5,061	772	10,319	5,009	20,000	79,713	123	250,246
1904-05	104,033	12,241	4,935	5,097	802	6,398	4,575	20,581	90,778	104	258,195
1905-06	100,782	15,019	4,504	4,127	492	5,701	4,822	15,169	99,829	112	260,177
Percentage of area under each crop on the total cropped area in 1905-06.	39	6	2	2	...	2	2	6	38	...	.. ...

The gross cropped area increased steadily from 228,000 acres at settlement to 260,000 in 1905-06, without that decline in the famine years which is so noticeable in other Districts. The staple crops are cotton and juār which together cover three-fourths of the whole area. The pulses, arhar, mūng and *popat* are grown mixed with them, usually in the ninth or twelfth row to mark off divisions in the main crop for weeding purposes. Wheat is only grown in the Pāndhurnā valley and the Khamārpāni tract to any appreciable extent. The cultivation in Sausar is very careful as is requisite for the soil, which repays good husbandry, but yields little to the sloven. Castor is grown as a minor crop in place of *jagnī* in Chhindwāra. There is practically no irrigation or double-cropping.

Land revenue.

The land-revenue demand at the 30 years' settlement was Rs. 99,000 and fell at 69 per cent. of the assets. It was raised at the recent settlement to Rs. 1·25 lakhs, giving an increase of Rs. 24,000 or 24 per cent. on the revenue immediately prior to revision and falling at 58 per cent. of the assets, which amounted to Rs. 2·16 lakhs. The cash rental was Rs. 1·76 lakhs. In 1904-05 the demand for cesses was Rs. 16,500, which has been reduced by the abolition of the patwāri cess and Additional Rate to Rs. 7000. The tahsīl has 28 ryotwāri villages paying a revenue of Rs. 2340. At the 30 years' settlement the tahsīl was divided into the parganas of Pāndhurnā with 80 villages, Mohgaon with 213 and Khamārpāni with 116. At last settlement the old parganas were divided with slight modifications into the following assessment groups :—The Khamārpāni pargana formed the Khamārpāni group with 114 villages ; the Mohgaon pargana was divided into the Sausar group with 157 villages in the centre, Chicholī with 15 villages to the south-west, and Ambāra with 44 villages to the north-west ; while the Pāndhurnā pargana became the Pāndhurnā group with 89 villages. The average rent-rate per acre was R. 0-12-2 as against R. 0-9-9 for the

District as a whole, and the revenue rate R. 0-7-11. Sausar was the most highly assessed group with a rent-rate of R. 1-0-7. The rates for the other groups were: Pāndhurnā R. 0-10-6, Chicholī R. 0-9-11, Khamārpāni R. 0-8-7 and Ambāra R. 0-4-7.

Miscellaneous.

The tahsil is divided into two Revenue Inspectors' circles with headquarters at Pāndhurnā and Rāmākonā and into 67 patwāris' circles. It has three police Station-houses with headquarters at Sausar, Pāndhurnā, and Bichhua and five outposts.

Sausar Town.—The headquarters town of the Sausar tahsil, Chhindwāra District, situated in 21° 40′ N. and 78° 48′ E. on the Chhindwāra-Nāgpur road, 34 miles south of Chhindwāra on the main road to Nāgpur. Its area is nearly 4000 acres and the population was 4785 persons in 1901 as against 4707 in 1891. The name is supposed to be derived from *chaunsar*, a game played with cowries on a pattern of lines resembling the sails of a wind-mill, as the arrangement of the streets of Sausar bears some resemblance to this pattern. The town is situated on sloping ground on the banks of the Bāgh stream, over which a stone bridge, carrying the Nāgpur-Chhindwāra road, was erected in 1905. The village of Sausar belongs to the descendant of the Deogarh Gond Rājā, being assessed with him on a permanent quit-rent of Rs. 4300. His agent resides in an old mud fort in the town. The population is mainly agricultural, and there are a number of Mālis who grow sweet potatoes and other garden crops by irrigation. There is also a cotton hand-weaving industry. Weekly markets are held on Monday and Thursday. Sausar was created a municipality in 1867, and the average receipts for the decade ending 1901 were Rs. 1700. In 1905-06 the receipts were Rs. 3600 and were mainly derived from a house-tax. Hitherto the income of the municipal committee, after paying for its staff and for the town schools, has barely

sufficed to make the most elementary provision for sanitation. The town has very little trade. Sausar has a vernacular middle school with 140 pupils enrolled in 1905-06, a dispensary and a *sarai*. There are also the tahsīl office, police Station-house and post office, and an inspection bungalow.

Sonpur Jagir.—A jāgīr estate lying between those of Harrai and Partābgarh in the north-east of the District and adjoining the *khālsa* area of the Chhindwāra tahsīl. It is situated on the main hill chain of the Chhindwāra tahsīl and consists partly of open plateau land and partly of broken hill and valley. The Bamhnī tāluka also belongs to Sonpur, but is divided from it by Partābgarh and Batkāgarh. Bamhnī is in the valley to the north of the great hill chain, but its soil is scarcely superior to the rest. The area of the jāgīr is 188 square miles. Sonpur was formerly included in the Harrai jāgīr, but was seized by Chain Shā from his minor nephew, the jāgīrdār of Harrai, about 1818. Chain Shā was, however, deported for complicity in the rebellion of Appa Sāhib and died at Chānda and in 1826 the jāgīr was conferred on his son Sone Shā. In 1867, when the latter's son Jugrāj Shā held the estate, the Settlement Officer recorded that the families of his four brothers would be entitled each to a one anna six pie share on partition, which, however, they did not desire at that time. But one of the families subsequently brought a suit for their share and obtained a decree from the Judicial Commissioner's Court.[1] Subsequently to this, however, a *sanad* was issued declaring the jāgīr impartible. The other branches hold a number of villages for their maintenance, the jāgīrdār receiving the forest revenue, and, as a rule, the local cesses, though in some cases the delivery of these was withheld at settlement. The present holder is Bhīkham Shā. He is 40 years old. The jāgīrdār's headquarters are at Dhanorā (population 708), at a distance of 37 miles from Chhindwāra, but he is not on good terms with his brothers, and has for some time been residing at

[1] Case No. 1 of 1870.

Amarwāra in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, where his sons attend the school. The population in 1901 was 9712 persons, having decreased by 15 per cent. during the previous decade. The density is 52 persons per square mile, and the estate has 61 villages, of which only one is uninhabited. Twenty villages are held on *mukāsa* tenure or free of revenue. The soil in part of the estate is suitable for the growth of spring crops. Of the total area, 42,000 acres or 35 per cent. are occupied for cultivation, and 36,000 are covered by tree-forest. The cropped area is 28,000 acres, the principal crops being kodon-kutkī (9000) and wheat (4600). The Chhindwāra-Narsinghpur road is of advantage to the estate, but there is considerable room for improvement in the communications of the interior, where there are splendid forests of teak. In 1895 the annual receipts were found to be Rs. 13,000, excluding those from excise. In 1905-06 they amounted to Rs. 11,000. The *takoli* paid prior to 1867 was Rs. 9 in cash, 30 seers of *chironji* and two seers of honey. The present *takoli* is Rs. 467. The estate is not well managed, and the jāgīrdār is indebted. The District Council maintains a school at Dhanorā.

Tamia.—A small village in the Pagāra jāgīr, 35 miles north of Chhindwāra on the Piparia road. Its area is more than 3000 acres and the population was 800 persons in 1901 as against under 200 in 1891. Tāmia has an elevation of 3726 feet and overlooks the valley of the Denwā and the Mahādeo hills lying beyond it. In the valley below is the novel and refreshing sight of the deep green of a *sāl* forest, and across the valley the precipitous southern face of the Mahādeo hills is rich in the colouring of its sandstone and carved by the action of the rain into a half-formed colonnade of pillars.[1] A tank was constructed in the famine of 1897, and presents a picturesque appearance. The village has a primary school, a police outpost and a post office, and there is an inspection bungalow.

[1] Mr. Montgomerie's Chhindwāra Settlement Report, p. 11.

Umreth.—A large village in the Chhindwāra tahsīl, 16 miles west of Chhindwāra on the old Betūl road and at the source of the Kulbehrā river. The old road to Pachmarhī branches off from Umreth. Its area is 3600 acres and the population in 1901 was nearly 2000 persons, having increased by 300 during the previous decade. The village stands on poor sandy soil in the hilly country, but sugarcane, potatoes and other vegetables are raised by irrigation. A weekly market is held on Sundays and an annual fair takes place after Holī for the celebration of Meghnāth or the swinging ceremony. Formerly the Bhumkā or village priest was swung round by a hook inserted in his back, but now he is only secured to a cross-beam by a rope. The people make offerings of goats, the body being taken by the owner, while the heads are divided between the Bhumkā, the kotwār and the village carpenter, the last being probably included as the maker of the post and cross-beam used in the swinging ceremony. More than 100 goats are sometimes slaughtered and cash offerings are also made, which are divided between the Bhumkā and the mālguzār of the village. The ceremony and the offerings made are no doubt intended to secure the prosperity of the crops. On the Sunday before the Meghnāth ceremony, a large market is held, known as the Lāoni bazar, this being an occasion on which moneylenders settle their accounts with the cultivators. Umreth has a primary school and a Mission girls' school, aided by a Government grant, a police station-house and a post office. The proprietor is a Mārwāri Baniā.